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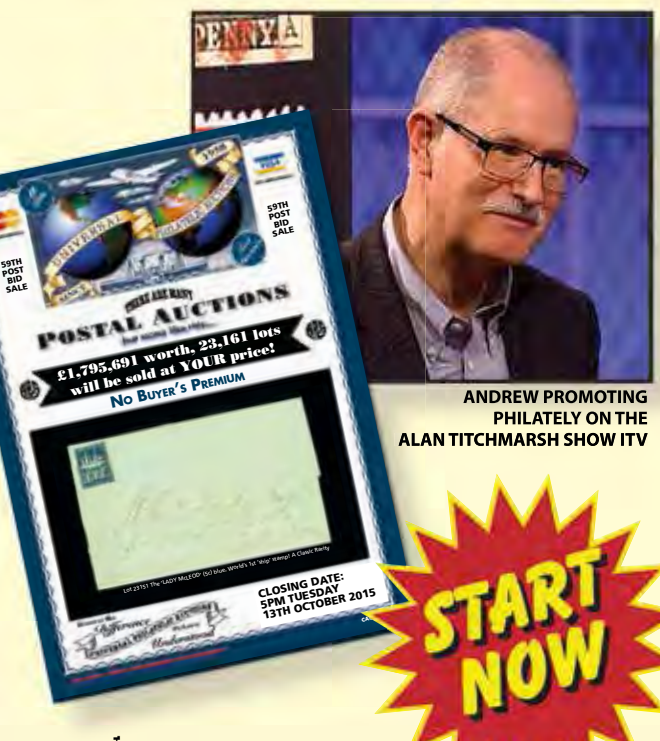
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WELCOME

Royal Mail's Star Wars stamp set is Britain's biggest yet – in terms of the number of stamps – and has proved to be hugely popular with many collectors and fans of the films. The issue has grabbed the headlines and put stamps in the limelight, but some collectors have expressed their concerns at the number of stamps and the chosen subject. You can read our Star Wars debate on our website (just visit: http://stamp.cm/sw-debate) and I'd love to hear your views on the stamps.

For me, the stamps give us the chance to share our hobby with thousands of 'non-collectors', we can use the set to grab the attention of young collectors and show them that stamps can cover all kinds of subjects, that they can be exciting, contemporary and accessible. Yes, we want younger generations to embrace the more academic aspects of our hobby, but forming a collection of science fiction stamps could lead to a lifelong interest in stamp collecting.

With that thought in mind, we cover the subject of science fiction stamps on page 69 and provide a guide to Star Wars stamps and coins on page 72, while we also bring you the usual mix of articles covering many different aspects of stamps, coins and postal history. As ever, the contents reflect the diverse nature of our hobby. Whether it's characters from a galaxy far, far away, or events on our own planet, our hobbies provide something for everyone!



Isn't Star Wars American? Discover the many British links to the film on page 15

Matt Hill, Editor
matthewh@warnersgroup.co.uk

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website: www.stampandcoin.co.uk

PUBLISHER
Janet Davison
jand@warnersgroup.co.uk

EDITORIAL
Managing Editor: Matt Hill
matthewh@warnersgroup.co.uk
Deputy Editor: Rachel Bellerby
rachelb@warnersgroup.co.uk
Contributors: John Apfelbaum, Ed Archer, Michael Adkins, Brian Austin, David Bailey, Paul Brittain, Christer Brünstrom, Ed Fletcher, Dane Garrod, Amanda Grieve, David Gwynn, Paula Hammond, Richard Kelleher, Keijo Kortelainen, Frank Spencer, Richard Tarrant, Steve Webb, Chris West.

PRODUCTION
Senior designer: Nathan Ward
nathanw@warnersgroup.co.uk
Designers: Laura Tordoff, Mary Ward
ads@stampandcoinmart.co.uk

MARKETING
Lauren Beharrell
lauren.beharrell@warnersgroup.co.uk
Tel: 0113 200 2916

ADVERTISING
Kathryn Ford
kathrynf@warnersgroup.co.uk
Tel: 0113 200 2925

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Collette Smith
scm@warnersgroup.co.uk
Tel: 01778 392030

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MEET THE EXPERTS...



Professional writer Chris West has written about subjects including crime fiction, history, and how to start a business. He has written two books on stamps, including *First Class: A History of Britain in 36 Postage Stamps*, and details Canada's 1898 Christmas stamp on page 55.



David Bailey has been trading in Portobello Market, on and off, since 1995. These days he trades from a street stall on sunny Fridays and on Delcampe. David shares his thoughts on definitive stamps on page 25 and continues his study of Italian States stamps on page 48.



Michael Adkins collects stamps and banknotes from countries, colonies or occupational forces which no longer exist. He manages the website DCStamps.com and writes our regular 'dead countries' series which, this month, focuses on the Lithuanian Occupation of Klaipeda (page 52).

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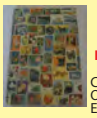
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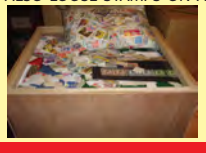
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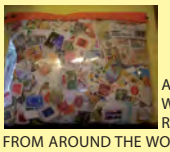


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Royal Mail reveal 2016 stamp schedule

The schedule of British stamps to be issued during 2016 has been revealed, with the Queen's ninetieth birthday and the 500th anniversary of Royal Mail amongst the subjects.

The stamp year will begin with a set to mark the 100th anniversary of Sir Ernest Shackleton's *Endurance* Expedition, which began in 1914 and saw the ship become trapped in the ice in early 1915, prompting an epic journey to find help. The founding of Royal Mail, in 1516 when Henry VIII established a 'Master of the Posts' will be celebrated in February, while British Humanitarians will be honoured in March in a set likely to follow the design of the previously issued 'Remarkable Lives' set of 2014.

The 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death will see the bard return to British stamps



once again, while the ongoing First World War series will return in June. Rock band Pink Floyd, who previously appeared in the Classic Album Covers set of 2010 (above), will have a set dedicated to their work in July, while writer Agatha Christie is to be honoured in September.

2016 stamps

7 January - *Endurance* Expedition
17 February - Royal Mail (500 years)
15 March - British Humanitarians
5 April - William Shakespeare
21 April - HM The Queen 90th Birthday
17 May - Animail
21 June - Great War 2016
7 July - Music Icons (Pink Floyd)
28 July - Beatrix Potter
16 August - Landscape Gardens
2 September - Great Fire of London
15 September - Agatha Christie
20 October - TBA
8 November - Christmas

Countries issue stamps for Christmas

It might seem like we've only just said goodbye to the summer, but Christmas is quickly approaching and a host of philatelic bureaux around the world have revealed their seasonal stamps.

As detailed in our regular 'Around the Islands' feature, on page 40, Jersey and Guernsey have opted to show stained glass windows on their festive stamps, with a definite religious theme. New Zealand have also gone for stained glass, 'ranging in design from the traditional to the contemporary'.

Royal Mail re-tell the familiar nativity story across six designs (see page 32), and an Australian 65c stamp depicts the scene shortly after the birth of Christ. There's a more jovial nativity scene in Lichtenstein's set of four, which celebrate Christmas carols, while Monaco's 76 cent value features a drawing of the Virgin and Child with the palm trees of the principality in the background.

Canada have gone for some animal magic on their secular stamps, with three designs showing a bull moose wearing a red scarf and hat; a beaver sporting a flat cap and chewing on some holly; and a polar bear in a red cap, scarf and sweater, respectively. Aland and



Greenland have taken similar routes; Greenland's single issue shows three polar bears looking towards a star, and Aland's Christmas seals show two birds and two reindeer flying through the air on skis. The tiny Finnish region's two seasonal stamps also feature birds and reindeer, and incorporate the beautiful 'paper art' of Fideli Sundqvist, who created the originals for the stamps entirely in paper before photographing them.

Swiss Post's four values must be some of the year's brightest issues, showing colourful snow globes packed full of seasonal items such as baubles, a snowman, presents and candles. While Denmark's stamps are less vibrant, they still get us in the festive mood, showing three Christmas biscuits ready to be eaten.







In brief

Charles Blane has been appointed Managing Director of Spink USA and has relocated to New York to 'further galvanize Spink's thriving American business'.

Åland Post recently issued a special, previously unannounced stamp to honour Finnish football cup winners IFK Mariehamn. A spokesperson said: 'The stamp has been created using the frame for personalised My Stamps and is only sold via the Post's web shop.'

The Faroe Islands have issued a set of four 'stamps on stamps' franking labels recalling the overprinted Danish stamps used during a shortage of stamps in the Second World War.

Russia have issued their first set of stamps to celebrate their hosting of the 2018 FIFA World Cup. The six stamps feature the designs of Russia's previously issued football stamps from 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1982, and 1986. Meanwhile, a circular miniature sheet features one value showing the famous World Cup trophy.

To coincide with Remembrance Day, Australia Post has commemorated 'the valour and sacrifice made by countless animals during Australia's involvement in war' with the release of a 'A Century of Service: Animals in War' stamp set.

The USA have issued a set of four Geometric Snowflakes Forever stamps. US Postal Service Northeast Area Operations Vice President Richard Uluski said: 'These bright, cheerful stamps bring a whimsical splash to holiday cards, thank-you notes, invitations, greeting cards and any mailing that calls for a touch of warmth during the coldest months of the year.'

Tristan da Cunha are set to issue a set of four stamps recalling the 1885 Tristan Lifeboat Disaster, described as 'the most terrible disaster ever recorded in the island's history'. The stamps, issued on 27 November, depict scenes from the tragedy and were designed by Victor Ambrus. The stamps were printed by Lowe-Martin Group using lithography.

Fur and feathers on new Post & Go

Royal Mail have chosen popular stamp collecting themes for their latest set of Post & Go stamps, with four 1st Class Winter Fur & Feathers stamps.

Issued on 16 November, the set features illustrations by Robert Gillmor of animals the mountain hare, redwing, red fox and red squirrel, all of which can be seen during the British winter. The self-adhesive stamps are designed by Osborne Ross and printed by International Security Printers using the gravure process.

Along with the stamps, a first day cover featuring a Tallents House handstamp is available and one showing the alternative handstamp with the location Winterley, Sandbach, which features a squirrel design (both £3.92). A Royal Mail statement explained: 'First-day-of-issue postmarking offices will be supplied with the alternative pictorial first-day-of-issue postmark. This will mean that all first day covers posted at the Post Office counter will be cancelled with the same pictorial postmark regardless of where they are posted.' A first day envelope is also available for 30p, from selected Post Offices, 'approximately one week before the stamps go on sale'.



Spink offer rare North America

A collection of rare USA and Canada stamps, including many imperforates and proofs, is set to go under the hammer later this month at Spink's New York office.

The Charles W Adams collection comprises 213 lots and is described by the auction house as: 'quite an unusual offering in that Mr. Adams was not at all an album space filler. Instead he collected rarities, pairs, especially imperforates and proofs'.



Highlights of the sale include an unused 4c Pan-American with inverted centre, with a pre-sale estimate of $85,000 (£54,970). 'This lot is extremely rare as there were only two sheets of 100 each of the four cent Pan-American with centres inverted intentionally made for Post Office records,' a spokesperson explained. 'An unknown number of these were overprinted "Specimen" and all others were destroyed. The non-"Specimen" examples were mounted in a Post Office Department book resulting in the vast majority of them having disturbed gum, and a number were also thinned in an effort to remove them from mounting paper. Very few exist today with completely undisturbed original gum or free of faults.'

Other notable lots include a Canadian 1851 12d, one of just 1,450 stamps that were ever sold in over three and a half years of use. The rare stamp, printed by Rawdon, Wright, Hatch & Edison, the printers of the 1847 first issues of the United States, is expected to sell for $185,000 (£119,600). A 3c 1875 re-issue of the USA's 1869 issue, is expected to fetch $5,000 (approximately £3,233), and has the highest grade ever awarded to this stamp.

The auction takes place on 18 November. For more information visit: www.spink.com

Competition winners: Congratulations to the following readers, who won Royal Mail Rugby World Cup presentation packs in October issue: George Maddin, London; Reg Bibby, Weymouth; Mr F Bacon, Nailsea; Harry Taylor, Grange Over Sands; Andrew McIver, Whitby; Keith Hatch, Maidenhead; Sybil Innes, Edinburgh; Peter Lovesey, Louth; Mr P Webb, Darlington; M Somerville, Whitburn. Christine Johnson of Kendal won a Jersey Post Winston Churchill prize pack.

Jersey Post & Go sold at German fair

Jersey's JE01 series Post & Go kiosk was recently taken to the annual International Stamp Fair in Sindelfingen, Germany, which took place across three days, from 29 to 31 October.

The JE01 kiosk vended Jersey Post's original Jersey flag stamps featuring the exhibition overprint: 'Sindelfingen October 2015'. The overprint was available on Jersey flag stamps for the duration of the event. Before the event Melanie Gouzinis, Head of Philatelic at Jersey Post, said: 'This is the first time our JE01 machine has travelled to the fair at Sindelfingen. The show is known for being a popular event and we're looking forward to introducing our Post & Go stamps to a new audience. As well as vending the original Jersey flag design, JE01 will vend stamps featuring our Jersey Protected Species design without the overprint.'

Back in the Channel Islands, Jersey Post's static JE02 kiosk has been vending Jersey flag stamps with a special Royal Air Forces Association overprint from 30 October. The overprint, marking the Jersey branch of the Royal Air Forces Association's ninetieth anniversary, will read 'RAFA Jersey 90' and are available for one month only.



Francis Kiddle remembered



Renowned British philatelist and member of the *Stamp & Coin Mart* Advisory Board Francis Kiddle sadly passed away in October, at his home in Fleet.

Francis worked in the space industry, retiring in 1997, as Assistant Director of Space Technology Research, at the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency in the United Kingdom. He started collecting at age six and, in his own words, 'never stopped'. Francis soon became known as a 'Cinderella' enthusiast, as well as very serious collector of revenues and local stamps.

Francis played a major role in organised philately over the past three decades, and served as President of the Royal Philatelic Society, Chairman of our National Federation, and as an international and national judge and exhibitor. Chris King, Chair of ABPS National Exhibitions and International Committee, said: 'He was many times a philatelic judge at FIP Exhibitions and at exhibitions in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world, and was Curator of the Perkins Bacon Archive held by the Royal Philatelic Society London until his death. He was a great friend to philately, and philatelists everywhere, and will be sorely missed.'

Francis wrote for *Stamp & Coin Mart* on a number of different subjects, including the history of major British stamp exhibitions, and was happy to give advice and assistance to the editorial team. He was married, with two sons and two grandchildren.

Francis' philatelic contributions include:

1994-1996	President of the Royal Philatelic Society London
1996-2005	Chairman of the British Philatelic Trust
2006	Signed the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists
2006	USA Smithsonian Museum Lifetime Achievement Award
2008-2015	Chairman of the FIP Revenue Commission
2009	Honorary Fellowship Royal Philatelic Society London
2012	The Lichtenstein Award

Turkey win 2015 Europa Competition



Turkey's stamp showing a photograph of an old wooden car toy has been voted this year's favourite Europa stamp.

The results of the 2015 PostEurop EUROPA Online competition were recently announced at the PostEurop Plenary Assembly in Limassol, Cyprus. Turkey won the gold medal, with Hungary coming second and Finland winning the bronze award. Meanwhile, additional prizes were also awarded to the winners of the 2015 PostEurop EUROPA Jury competition during a special ceremony during the Belgian Philatelic Grand Prix ceremony, with Russia earning gold, Sweden silver and Latvia the bronze.



Anita Häggblom, Chair of the Stamps & Philately Working Group, said: 'Like Confucius once said "I hear and I forget, I see and I remember. I do and I understand", these Old Toys have reminded us of the little joys that once helped us during our childhood, to experience and better understand the world. Congratulations to all the winners and especially to Turkish PTT-Turkey and 'Marka'-Russia, for their achievements in this year very close competition.'

This year's EUROPA theme was 'Old Toys – a trip down memory lane' and 56 themed stamp sets were issued throughout Europe. According to the organisers more than 10,000 votes were registered via the www.posteurop.org website, with Turkey coming out on top.

Don't miss next month's *Stamp & Coin Mart* magazine for your preview of next year's EUROPA theme of 'Ecology in Europe – think green' and the results of the competition to select a common EUROPA stamp design for 2016.

In brief

After staging auctions at the Lord Leycester Hotel for several years, Warwick and Warwick auctioneers are now returning to former venue The Court House in Jury St. Warwick CV34 4EW for all sales, commencing with the philatelic auction on 13 January, 2016. Richard Beale, Valuer – Collectables Department, said: 'The Court House is in the same street as the Lord Leycester Hotel, on the opposite side of the road. It is an attractive 18th-century building and the sales take place in the ornate ballroom, on the first floor. There is a lift for the disabled. There is no parking at the Court House, however there is ample parking in the nearby public car parks. As previously, there will be no viewing of lots at the auction venue. All viewing, invoice settlement and lot collection will take place at Chalon House.' Find out more about Warwick and Warwick online at: www.warwickandwarwick.com

The *Stamp & Coin Mart* team are currently working on a new-look website, to be launched before the end of the year. The new site is set to feature more news and articles, as well as events listings, regular auction reports, expert blogs and a comprehensive trade directory. To keep updated on the website and to receive exclusive news, offers and competition details, why not sign up to the *Stamp & Coin Mart* e-newsletter? Just visit: http://stamp.cm/esign-up and enter your details.

New Zealand Post are celebrating the nation's Rugby World Cup win by issuing a special 'All Blacks World Champions 2015 Stamp Sheet'. The sheet features six All Blacks stamps, issued before the tournament, and shows the triumphant team in the centre, with the score of the final against Australia underneath. Meanwhile, Royal Mail marked the end of World Cup with a special postmark congratulating the winners, New Zealand. The postmark read: Congratulations to New Zealand Rugby World Cup 2015 winners' and was featured on post sent between 31 October and 4 November.

Stamp enthusiasts visit Italy



Members & partners of the Italy & Colonies Study Circle, from the UK and USA, recently travelled to Rovereto in Northern Italy for a philatelic excursion, visiting a stamp and postcard fair in Lana and a postal history exhibition in Rovereto.

The trip of nine nights included excursions to Merano, Asiago, Valsugana, Levico Terme, Bolzano and Riva on Lake Garda. Group spokepserson Paul Woodness said: 'The group had the opportunity of visiting a number of museums dedicated to the First World War, during which Italy were our allies... We also visited the Italian war graves at Asiago and the British war graves at Roana cemetery. Gastronomic highlights were many including an evening meal at Castle Noarna near Rovereto and a seeming everlasting lunch at Rifugio Kubelek at Roana and the obligatory trip to a Grappa distillery for tasting. The trip was considered another huge success and plans are already underway for a trip next April to Turin and Genova with trips to the Bolaffi Museum and Genova Stamp Show.'

Read more philatelic society news on page 80.

ABPS exhibits to be showcased in Stamp & Coin Mart

Stamp & Coin Mart are pleased to announce that they will be working with the Association of British Philatelic Societies (ABPS) on a new-look 'Reader's Stamps' article, beginning in the January issue of *Stamp & Coin Mart*.

The new monthly article will showcase exhibits featured in recent ABPS events, such as the national exhibition at Stampex, and will include expert comments, giving readers a helpful guide to creating and presenting an exhibition. If you would like to take part in the article in a future issue, just e-mail matthewh@warnersgroup.co.uk.

Meanwhile, the ABPS are looking forward to another busy year of stamp exhibitions in 2016. 'This year a limited National Exhibition, for the Postal History Class only, was run at the July York Racecourse stamp show,' ABPS consultant and judge Brian Trotter told us. 'This York exhibition was very successful, and in July 2016 a larger National Exhibition will be held at the York Racecourse show, this time open to all exhibiting Classes.'

Spring Stampex, taking place between 17 and 20 February, 2016, will play host to a full national exhibition with all classes and the 'Seven Nations Challenge', an invited competitive exhibition comprising four entries, in different classes, from each of Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom and the USA. 'The exhibits are judged by an accredited team of jurors, and the appropriate medals awarded,' Brian added. 'Achieving the appropriate award at a British National Exhibition permits the exhibitor to apply for entry in an international exhibition anywhere in the world.'

The national exhibition entry application forms with all the information and regulations for entry are to be found on the ABPS website: www.abps.org.uk

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GERMANY
West Berlin 100's from range O'Prints to 80pf (black & red) then apparently complete to 1990 ex 1949 Relief sheet but inc U.P.U Goethe Relief set, Bells complete, 1953 Church re-construction etc. All very fine used Cat £3880 **£480.00**

West 1000's in Lincoln album fairly complete both M & FU 1949-2002. The early Welfare sets are M & FU, Posthorns complete and mint vals include 25pf, 50pf, 60pf etc. Heuss complete M & FU etc. A wonderful lot Cat £6700 **£1100.00**

GREEK ISLANDS
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IRELAND
Few 100's in appro book inc 1922 Dollard Co 10d, Thom (June) set Thom December to 10/=, good Commems inc '53 An Tostal, Emmet etc to 1970 Cat £1240 **£210.00**

JERSEY
100's virtually complete UNM in Lindner hingeless album 196-87 inc dues M/S etc **£120.00**

MONTENEGRO
140+ from Prince Nicholas types to 2f inc scarce early perfs, 1896 set, 1902 set, 1907 set etc Clean lot Cat £1550 **£210.00**

SLOVAKIA
Republic 1939-45 complete M / and or FU excluding the 3.50K violet O'Print and 10K. Nice lot **£45.00**

SWEDEN
Many 100's in bulging Lighthouse album 1945-77 inc '55 Stockholmia set in sheetlets, booklet panes, perf varieties etc. Mainly UNM Cat £1675 **£195.00**

YUGOSLAVIA
Few 100's from 1918 (nov) set 1926 King Alexander set (M) '28 Charity set, '34 Sokol Games, '38 Balkan Games, '45 Assembly M/S both etc Cat £780 **£110.00**

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Q&A: Malcolm Tween

We spoke to British designer Malcolm Tween about how he became involved in the Star Wars stamps and what was involved in producing the stamp-sized pieces of art







How did you become involved in the Star Wars stamps?
Luckily I was asked to work on the stamps after the Royal Mail had seen some of my other Star Wars artwork. I'd previously worked on several projects for Lucasfilm and also done a series of limited edition Star Wars prints.

Was it difficult to create illustrations that you knew would be reproduced at stamp-size?
Actually that's one of the biggest challenges, they have to work perfectly primarily at stamp size, but also in much larger formats for various promotional uses too, so they need a lot of detail. The artwork is actually done at about 1,000 percent of repro size but often when you shrink down a large image, it doesn't always translate as well, so it was important they worked in both formats.

One of the key factors was that each stamp had to work on its own, but also look consistent and work within the complete set too, so it took a bit of balancing. The theme for each stamp was really important, each character has their own colour space to help make them easily identifiable within the set.

A lot of the reference material was of fairly low quality as it's taken from screen captures or old 1970s archive photos, so it took quite a lot of work to re-create some of the characters for the final high resolution artwork, especially the more technical ones such as Boba Fett and the stormtrooper, where all the detail of the costumes needs to be 100 percent correct before it's signed off by Lucasfilm. There's also a surprising amount of discrepancy between the costumes from film to film!

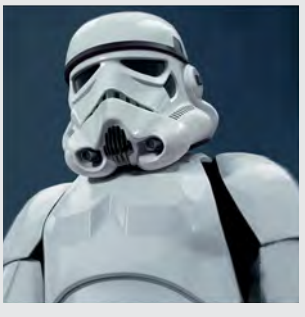
Were you aware of postage stamp design before the project?
My dad was actually a keen stamp collector so I was aware of many stamp issues in the past, but this is the first time I've been involved. It was fantastic to firstly work on a special stamp issue, but then for that to be Star Wars, which is arguably the biggest pop culture phenomena there is, that makes it a really unique and special opportunity. It feels like there is a certain amount of responsibility to both stamp collectors and Star Wars fans to not let them down!

Were you involved with the decision of which characters to depict?
The overall design process actually took quite a long time, I was involved for over a year, but before I got on board, a lot of initial development work had already been done. I was working throughout the project with design company Interabang who had tried out a huge amount of different combinations of the 'hero' characters and the inset scenes, so most of the character selection was already in the approval process. Ultimately Royal Mail had the final say, after lots of discussion with Lucasfilm. There are so many iconic characters across the films. It's actually surprisingly hard to select only twelve, I could definitely make arguments for some the of the ones that didn't make the final cut but I think overall it's a good balance. There are a few characters that aren't the perhaps the best known, such as the bounty hunters (Dengar, IG-88 and Bossk) on the Boba Fett stamp, but they will really appeal to the hardcore Star Wars fans, so I was really pleased they made the final cut.

Which is your favourite design?
I think the Vader and Finn stamps work really well, I also have a soft spot for the stormtrooper too, largely because the costume is such a brilliant piece of production design. It's always interesting working on characters from the new film when everything is still top secret. Because of the nature of the process you're working on content well in advance of it becoming public and often with relatively little background information, so it was great to finally see everything in context when the trailers were released.

How does it feel to know your designs will be used and collected around the world?
It's really exciting, Star Wars has an unprecedented universal fanbase, so when that's combined with the collectability of stamps it's going to be amazing. What's particularly great about this issue, is that it's the kind of thing that hopefully both stamp and Star Wars collectors will like, but also has a much broader mainstream appeal to lots of people who grew up with the films and just think it's really cool to have Star Wars stamps!

Are you a Star Wars fan yourself and will you be collecting all the stamps and related souvenirs?
Yes, definitely. I was six when the film was released so the perfect age. I think pretty much anyone who grew up in the late 70s and 80s is a Star Wars fan, it was certainly my most influential pop cultural reference at the time and a massive inspiration. I'll definitely be collecting all the stamp variants, I'm very much looking forward to sending out my Christmas cards with Darth Vader on!


Isn't Star Wars American?

Royal Mail's more commercial stamp sets often meet with criticism from collectors. Many are concerned at the number of stamps being issued, and the subsequent cost of buying them, while the choice of subject is often a matter of heated debate. The Star Wars stamps are no different.

The set of eighteen stamps, including the miniature sheet, is the biggest GB stamp set yet, and buying them all will cost £11.34, but at the values are all 1st Class, meaning costs are not as high as they could have been. Meanwhile, some see the film franchise as an American affair, owned by the US giant Disney, with only a tenuous link to Britain.

Naturally Royal Mail have been keen to point out the many British connections, not least the fact that the films have been largely filmed in the UK. The forthcoming prestige stamp book is titled 'The Making of Star Wars, the British Story' and 'details the extensive Britain involvement across the Star Wars saga including new film *The Force Awakens*'. Royal Mail have underlined the British connection in all press material. 'The UK is the third largest market in the world for the Star Wars films,' the initial press release stated, 'and the new stamps will reflect the passion of the British public for the movies, and celebrate the major British contribution to the film series.'

We detail some of the British links to the Star Wars universe here, but do let us know what you think; do you believe the British connection is strong enough to justify the large set of stamps?





Played by Brit David Prowse, Darth Vader was voiced by US actor James Earl Jones.



While American, puppeteer and voice of Yoda Frank Oz was born in Hereford.



Alec Guinness famously played the wise Jedi knight in the very first film.



Han Solo's furry friend Chewbacca is played by British actor Peter Mayhew.



One of the characters in the new film, Rey, is played by British actress Daisy Ridley.



British actors Kenny Baker and Anthony Daniels played droids R2D2 and C3PO.



The Emperor appears in four films and is played by Scottish actor Ian McDiarmid.



Leicestershire lad Jeremy Bulloch played fan favourite Boba Fett in the original trilogy.



Peckham-born Brit John Boyega plays Finn in new film *The Force Awakens*.



British actress Gwendoline Christie plays Captain Phasma (shown in corner).

Other British links

Filming for the Star Wars films has taken place at Ealing, Elstree, Leavesden and Shepperton Studios, all in England. *The Force Awakens* was filmed at Pinewood Studios in Buckinghamshire.

According to the *Daily Telegraph*, the new film brought a '£150m economic boost to Britain'.



Royal Mail's Star Wars stamp products include this 'Made in GB' logo

Two further episodes in the new trilogy will be filmed in the UK.

The effects for the new Star Wars film have been created by the London office of Industrial Light & Magic.

Return of the Jedi (1983) was directed by Welsh film-maker Richard Marquand.

More Star Wars in this issue…

Page 36 - Star Wars souvenirs from Royal Mail
Page 69 - Science fiction on stamps
Page 72 - Star Wars stamps and coins



The Star Wars debate

FOR…

A Disney film, on British stamps? Well, yes, but there can be few other blockbusters with such a strong link to our nation, argues Matt Hill. Indeed, the British influence on Star Wars is what gives the films that air of quality, the acting talents of Alec Guinness, for example, trading off with the more cheesy dialogue he once described as 'bloody awful, banal lines'…

AGAINST…

When British stamps have celebrated popular culture, there's usually been an anniversary involved (Alice, Dr Who, Tolkien, Bond) or the subject is indelibly British (Hammer, Carry On) or is a major cultural export (Beatles, Classic Albums, Potter), writes David Bailey. This set is to promote the release of the umpteenth movie in a 38-year-old franchise, created in America…

Read our full Star Wars debate, as editor Matt Hill and contributor David Bailey argue for and against the new stamps, on our website: stamp.cm/sw-debate

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20th November	Royal National Hotel, London	11th December	Royal National Hotel, London
28th November	Sutton Coldfield	2nd January	Sutton Coldfield
5th December	Litchfield	8th January	Royal National Hotel, London
6th December	Potters Bar	15th-16th January	York Race Course, York

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THE BRITISH POSTAL MUSEUM & ARCHIVE

Our regular update from the British Postal Museum & Archive as it works to open The Postal Museum in 2016



Post early for Christmas!

In the early years after the GPO Public Relations Department was created in 1934, it turned its hand to a problem that had been troubling the Post Office for many years. The public's Christmas posting habits. People were prone to leaving their mailing to the last minute, leading to surges in post a few days before Christmas. To combat this they commissioned a series of posters using colourful, festive imagery, reminding the public to 'Post Early for Christmas'.

These striking images were created by some of the era's most prolific designers such as Jan Le Witt and George Him, Barnett Freedman and Tom Eckersley. Posters proved a successful way of meeting the need of the Post Office, and over the life of the GPO Public Relations Department they were produced for a range of subjects including postage rates, the correct way to pack a parcel and methods of wartime communication. The Designs on Delivery gallery at The Postal Museum will explore the import role that design has played in the history of the postal service and will display artwork from some of these renowned designers.

On 18 December the BPMA will be putting a selection of duplicate vintage GPO posters created for the GPO Public Relations Department up for online auction with Onslows Auction House in Dorset. Please see www.onslows.co.uk for further details.





Events & exhibitions

Pop it in the Post: Your world at the end of the street

Until 21 November

Mansfield Museum, Leeming Street, Mansfield, NG18 1NG



Our touring family exhibition Pop it in the Post is now at Mansfield Museum and will be running until 21 November. The exhibition looks at the introduction of the pillar box and the beginning of the communications revolution it was part of. There will be original Victorian pillar boxes, uniforms to try on and a range of family activities.

Mail Rail: A glimpse through the tunnels

Until 29 November

Head of Steam, Darlington Railway Museum, Station Road, Darlington, DL3 6ST



An exhibition showcasing archival and recently captured photographs from the hidden Mail Rail network is open at Head of Steam in Darlington until 29 November. It will reveal to visitors what this remarkable site was like while in operation and how it looks now, before it opens to the public for the first time next year.

Dear Santa: The History of Writing to Father Christmas

1 December 7pm - 8pm

The British Postal Museum and Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London, WC1X 0DL



What's the journey of a letter to Saint Nick? How did it come to be this way, and how are things different around the world? Archives Assistant Ashley March delves into the Royal Mail Archive, and further afield, to explore the phenomenon of writing to Santa Claus.

Latest auction results



An unused New Zealand 1855-57 imperforate 1d dull carmine on white paper, with a large star watermark and small to good margins, without gum, was the highlight of Spink's 'Fordwater' Collection of New Zealand sale. The stamp was described as 'an exceptional example of this very rare stamp'.

SOLD FOR £25,000



An extensive study collection of the 1911 Coronation Durbar at Delhi, an event detailed in the October issue of *Stamp & Coin Mart*, was recently sold at Spink. In two volumes with a wide range of the different postmarks, the collection included postcards of the Royal yacht *Medina*, two letters of thanks to the Dowager Rani of Dewas, and an 'important collection' of the different Durbar cypher postmarks with the Coronation Durbar machine cancel and cds. The 1911 Durbar was attended by King George V and proclaimed the British king as Emperor and Empress of India.

SOLD FOR £5,500



The first Warwick & Warwick sale of the autumn season saw an 1841 Penny Red pair with very rare red Maltese Cross cancels, easily surpass the conservative estimate of £900. The Penny Red was introduced in February 1841, shortly after the Post Office changed to a black cancel, and the continued use of a red cancel was contrary to the new regulations to prevent stamps being re-used.

SOLD FOR £3,890





SOLD FOR £231

The recent Universal Philatelic Auctions postal sale included a range of Cayman Islands stamps, including a ½d overprint on 5s salmon and green fine used, which sold for £231 and an unissued 1d on 4d black and red/yellow which fetched £165.

SOLD FOR £142



The only recorded essay incorporating both the vignette and frame for the USA 10-cent 1847 issue in private hands was recently sold at Robert A Siegel. The 10c black, 1847 issue was the USA's first general stamp issue, following an Act which came into effect on 1 July, 1847. The large die essay on proof paper, showed an incomplete design, with the outer frame and 'RWH&E' initials (for printing firm Rawdon, Wright, Hatch and Edson) at bottom missing, as well as 'numerous lines of shading and detail found on subsequent proofs and the issued stamps'. The auction description explained the essay's rarity: 'The iconic 5c and 10c models for the 1847 Issue have long been known to the collector community and are now part of the permanent collection of the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum. This is the only full-design essay (less the framelines) that we record for the 10c 1847 Issue in private hands, and a check with leading dealers in proofs and essays confirmed this.'

SOLD FOR £12,291



The recent Grosvenor Philatelic Auctions sale saw two full imperforate sheets of thirty, frustratingly each missing one corner stamp, of the Queensland 1882-95 2s 6d stamp, go under the hammer. The sheets were printed as sample proofs by Bradbury Wilkinson in lake-brown and rosy vermilion, respectively.

SOLD FOR £3,808 (EACH)



The Grosvenor sale also included the collection formed by Bryant Rose, an early member of the Falkland Islands Philatelic Study Group. A highlight was a corner pair of the 1s with one stamp missing the overprint due to a paper fold.

SOLD FOR £11,052

Internet auctions

delcampe.net

Your quick reference price guide to recent internet sales, in association with delcampe.net



SOLD FOR £477
France 1 centime Empire type II 1860 block of twelve MNH



SOLD FOR £2,755
Papal States 5 baj 1867 essay from J. Delpierre (with cert. Bolaffi and E.Diena) — unique



SOLD FOR £896
Djibouti 1977 complete series local overprinting (signed) MNH - rare



SOLD FOR £2,128
France, amazing letter 1870 from Grignan to Montélimar franked with twenty stamps 2c Napoleon III red-brown



SOLD FOR £294
Germany Zeppelin - Chicagofahrt 1933 series MNH (signed)



SOLD FOR £294
South West Africa 1923 KGV 10/- in pair MNH



SOLD FOR £489
USA 1$ Buffalos Trans-Mississippi issue 1898 MH (with cert.)



SOLD FOR £2,464
China Actor Mei Lan-Fang sheetlet 1962 used first day cancel

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WORLD VIEW

Philately's 'Golden Age'



Countries have been issuing postage stamps for over 175 years. The classic period of stamp issues are from 1840 to 1900. And the modern period is from 1960 until now. The 'Golden Age of Philately' encompasses the issues from 1900 to 1960. These are, for most countries, the most popular issues and usually the most interesting as well.

By 1900, philately was already a well established hobby with tens of thousands of collectors worldwide. Postal agencies saw stamp collectors as a revenue source and began competing for their collecting dollar by issuing attractive limited issue sets to tempt collectors into buying them for their collection. Most of the very popular British, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and German colonial sets are from this period. The United States issued many of its best designed and most popular stamps. Fifteen or more Latin American countries issued tens of thousands of stamps and intentional and unintentional varieties. Japan issued many of its most sought after stamps, and of course other Asian issues have become a mainstay of the best sets of the hobby.

The First and Second World Wars contributed to the philatelic interest of this period. The scores of new issuing entities of Europe that the war produced (such as Saar, Danzig, and more) are fiercely popular and interesting collecting specialities. The war in Asia and Japanese occupations along with the Chinese Communist Revolution make for fantastic philately. And the liberation of scores of British, French, and Portuguese colonies after the Second World War means that this Golden Age has the first independence issues of such countries as India, Kuwait, Togo, and Burma.

Russia, too, has some of the world's most interesting issues in this period, from the Revolution issues to the wonderfully scarce and popular Soviet period sets from 1930 to 1960. The world's first airmails were issued in the Golden Age, and they by themselves could be a lifelong philatelic endeavour. All in all, if a collector had only one period to collect, the Golden Age would be the best choice of all.

John Apfelbaum has spent a lifetime learning about stamp collecting. He runs the venerable firm of stamp professionals Earl PL Apfelbaum, a business that has dealt in only stamps since 1901 and which was founded by his great grandfather. He can be reached at jda2006@aol.com



A Waterlow-printed King George V £1 dull blue-green was one of many varieties of the 'Seahorses' stamps on offer in recent the Universal Philatelic Auctions postal sale. The stamp was 'quite well centred', with a neat light 'thimble' cds, extremely fine used, and was described as a 'joyous example'.

SOLD FOR £760



China material on offer at Harmer-Schau Auction Galleries recently included a 1908 1c postal card bearing a ½c pair and a 2c single, both tied by 'Tungchangfu' cancels. The item also featured Shanghai cancels and a hand-painted scene on the reverse.

SOLD FOR £776



Canadian firm Sparks Auctions recently sold a range of early Canadian stamps, including many examples of Newfoundland's first issues of 1857. One of the highlights was this imperforate 8d scarlet, used with light oval grid cancel.

SOLD FOR £177

A previously unrecorded set (less the 5r.) of Uganda Railway Telegraphs from 1902 and perforated vertically 'CANCELLED' recently went under the hammer at Grosvenor Philatelic Auctions. Described as 'a further gem from the De Lacy-Spencer collection' the lot was eventually sold for over £2,000 after some fierce competition.

SOLD FOR £2,618



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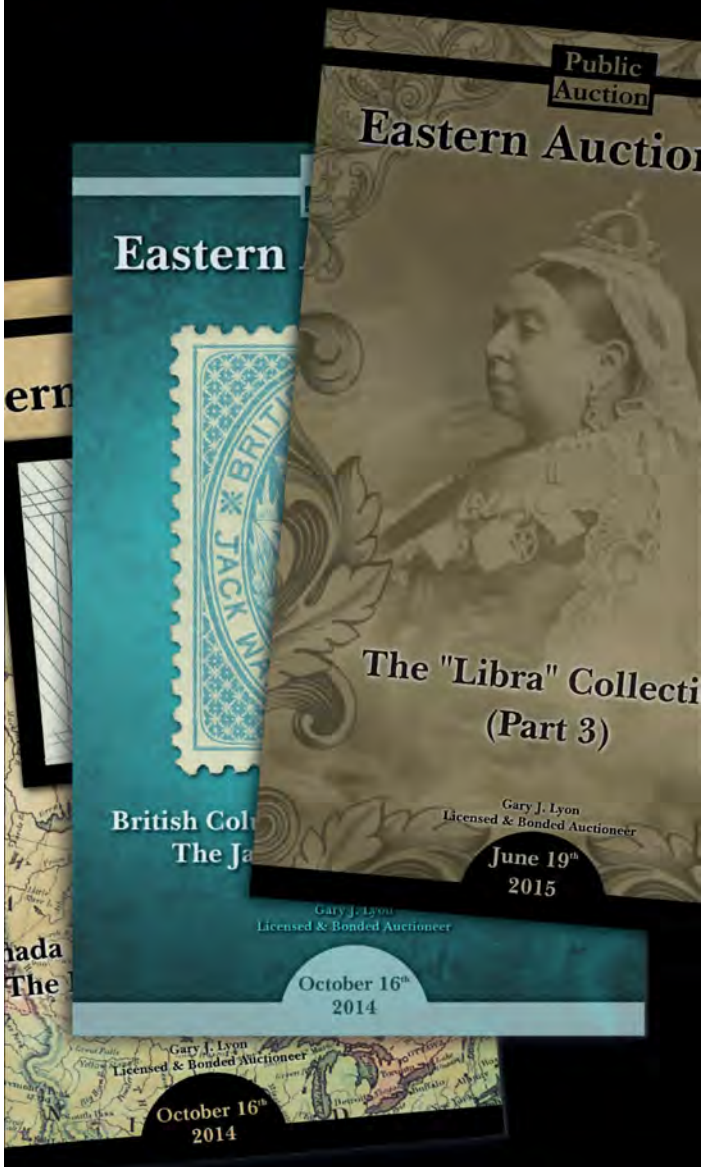
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SPECIAL OFFER NO.3: Buy 1 lb Ireland Charity & ½ lb Ireland Commems for the discounted price of £45. List price £56.
IRELAND COMMEMS. Includes very modern and rare! **¼ lb £21.00, ½ lb £40.00.**
IRELAND CHARITY. On paper. This emanates from convents throughout the Republic, is mostly modern with a wealth of Commems. **Price £16.50 / lb.**

SPECIAL OFFER NO. 4: Buy 1 lb World, 1 lb British Commonwealth and 1 lb W. Europe Scoop for the discounted price of £130. List price £150.00.
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Q. How to Build a Good Stamp Collection?

A. (Hint) If it's easy – maybe it is TOO easy...

10+ 'TOP TIPS' for Successful Collecting

As many of you know I made the decision to give up collecting when I started full-time in the trade 43 years ago. But here's what I perceive as a mistake I made in terms of re-sale value and in enjoyment. If you are not bothered about V A L U E then you don't need to read further...

What I collected then was easy to source. It was good quality. They were (and still are) lovely stamps but they would be worth less now than when I collected and that's more than 40 years ago. The basic mistake I made then was thinking that 'easy' made for a good stamp collection. Yes, 'easy' made for a lovely collection but I could buy those same stamps – in the SAME quality – from any number of different sources. I still can today … so if I can buy them easily today – will their value have appreciated? Has demand for what is/was easily available increased? The answer is a firm **NO**.

TIP As an 'aside'. In particular be wary of 'inertia' selling delivery systems – where you pay on direct debit / standing order system / monthly invoice. These systems usually hide the highest mark-ups in our industry and the lowest recovery value when it comes to sale. You are going to find this story particularly incredible – but about 13 years ago I was once called to clear a house-full of stamps. The owner had died leaving many 100's of ***unopened New Issue delivery envelopes.*** I opened one of the oldest envelopes. Inside was a note from the supplier saying sorry they had not delivered the MINT 1929 PUC £1 ! Ah well, I thought "such is life" – the collection included both mint Wembleys + literally masses more. Imagine my surprise when the next envelope opened included a MINT PUC £1 with a note saying "we found one for you" (and then the realisation that this High Value stamp had lain inside the same envelope for so long that it had a large brown 'rust-spot' on the reverse!

Returning to subject: So, what forms the basis of a **GOOD** stamp collection if I want **'resale VALUE'**?

TIP 1). The answer is, as usual, a combination of factors … BUT, if you think in terms of desirability and then dial in quality … this makes for a collection that others will wish to purchase. Of course collecting means that some of the stamps you source will be easily available … but if ALL the stamps you collect are easily available and on average they cost very little each … then you may have 1,000's of different stamps whose value lies in the actual handling cost of the supplier – not in their intrinsic value. So when it comes to selling this may result in little / no interest. Of course it goes without saying **TIP** – ***Always collect the Best quality that you can afford.***

Where Do I Source Good Stamps ?

2). Sadly, in some senses, the Philatelic World has changed. Gone are the days when in 1980 100,000 different Collectors descended upon the 1980 International Stamp Exhibition at Earls Court. I know because I was there. An International Stamp Show in the 'west' today may be lucky to see 10,000 visitors. A stamp fair today in a local village / town may be lucky to see 30 visitors let alone 20 actual buyers … when you consider that 15 dealers may have travelled to such a venue – is it any surprise that many Collectors may see the same stamps they saw at that same venue a month before?

3). No, the answer is that Stamp Collecting is alive and well – stamp shops are almost non-existent, fortunately there's still a few left – but 'underground' – on-line, by mail-order and at auction things are still 'humming' depending upon whom you are dealing with. So, let's look at potentially / probably the biggest sourcing area of the hobby apart from retail which is fairly self-explanatory … and that is bidding / buying at Stamp Auction.

4). **Nowadays there are three types of stamp auction:** – Pure Internet / Public - (including on-line bidding) / Postal (Mail-Bid Sales – including on-line). Each has its strengths and weaknesses. Let's start with Pure Internet live auctions, I won't mention names but in some senses these are today's equivalent of the 'Wild West'. As fast as these internet Giants catch up with the some of the crooks using them, the crooks move a step ahead … many internet bidders using them are 'hooked'.

TIP 4a). They have become 'live auction obsessed' unwilling / not capable of looking elsewhere – thinking that bidding / buying this way guarantees value which it does not. What happens when they come to sell?

Please turn to PAGE 34 ☛

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In praise of the humble definitive

Columnist David Bailey salutes the footsoldiers of the philatelic world which often get overlooked as they battle with pictorials and oddities for space in the collector's album



One way to form an all-world collection is to stick to definitive sets. These are the workhorses of the postal world; they're there to prepay postage, not to celebrate people, commemorate events or raise money for good causes. They tend to have a long working life, so there's lots of them about and even the top values should be within the average budget.

Typically, the series will be denominated to fill the maximum number of postal rates with the lowest number of stamps. A glorious exception to this is the US Presidential series from 1938-54, which made room for all the presidents to date, with the first 22 presidents on stamps from 1c to 22c. Used copies of all of them are easy enough to find but single use on cover can be tricky.

The template for all definitive series was set by France in 1849. A single design serves for six values with only the rates and colours changing. Lacking a suitable head of state, they chose Ceres, the grain goddess, who also appears on definitives from Portugal. Greece chose Hermes/Mercury the messenger of the Gods. Other 'off the peg' symbols you'll find are posthorns and breaking chains.

Britain did not have a true definitive set until 1884, and then not one to be proud of until 1879. The need to accommodate doubly-fugitive inks (and De La Rue's prodigality with design) meant that each stamp in the Jubilee set is different, while it still hangs together as a unit. All British definitive sets up to 1967 would have this variety of treatments, a contrast to the monotony that can set in when just the rates and colours change.

There is a convention in the stamp world that definitive sets should last for at least five years before being changed. Looking through Gibbons, seven to ten years seems to be the norm. But there are always exceptions. The Norwegian Posthorn design first appeared on 25 December, 1871; it's still around today. And then there's Malta between the wars. From 1924 until 1926 they used a set featuring the figure Melita and inscribed 'Postage and Revenue'. On 1 April, 1926, this was overprinted 'Postage'. Five days later a pictorial set appeared this, too, was inscribed 'Postage'. Then from 1 October, 1928, the set was overprinted 'Postage and Revenue'. Finally on 20 October, 1930 a revised pictorial set appeared, again reading 'Postage and Revenue'. That's five definitive sets in as many years.



Long-lived designs create varieties, which can draw in the general collector until suddenly, he or she turns into a specialist. With the French 'Sower' series of the early 20th century, you might be satisfied with the three basic types. But then you might notice the thinner figures on some values, or differences in the engraving, and more shade variations than a Dulux Trade colour chart. And then you find that the Sower section has outgrown the rest of your collection.

The face of a country

When designing definitive stamps, each country creates a face to show the world. And the results can be fascinating. In 1913, Australia's first stamps (the Map and Kangaroo) were defiantly devoid of monarchist symbols. Many Australians were shocked. Then a change of government produced the George V profile heads and the two designs co-existed happily until 1936. This year Australia was again debating whether to replace the Queen as head of state.

To me, printing the same stamp for half a century represents an institutional cop out; the Machin is the only design that no-one can seriously object to

Other countries commemorate agriculture and industry, historic sights and scenic attractions, trees and flowers, animals and birds, or regional crafts and costumes. Communist states promoted their five-year plans. In the 1970s, while the cold war rumbled on, the USA produced the 'Americana' series, a proud restatement of American culture and values. In 1991, Romania produced a 21-stamp set that featured its hotels.

When you think about a definitive collection, it's easy to imagine row after row of royal profiles. But most countries are republics and their changing visions of themselves provide an endless source of fascination.

So where does that leave Britain's iconic Machin series?

To me, printing the same stamp for half a century represents an institutional cop out: it's the only design that no-one can seriously object to. It also reflects changing times and commercial realities. Royal Mail will invest in design and production where it can see a return; from each year's commemoratives. Fortunately, there are other countries, and other times. And definitives can take you there.

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FB20b Temple Winds 121/2p LB £1.50
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FB21b Temple Sun 121/2p LB £1.50
FB22a Water Gardens RB £1.50
FB22b Water Gardens LB £1.50
FB23a Bagot Goat 121/2p RB £1.70
FB23b Bagot Goat 121/2p LB £1.70
FB24a Old Spot Pig (37p) £2.80
FB24b Old Spot Pig (36p) £10.00
FB25 Toulouse Goose £3.00
FB26 Orkney Sheep £3.00
FB27 Orchid 1 ..... £2.20
FB28 Orchid 2 ..... £2.20
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FB32 Pond Life 1 ..... £1.60
FB33 Pond Life 2 (star) £1.60
FB33a Pond Life 2 ..... £1.60
FB34 Roman Britain £6.00
FB35 Pond Life 3 ..... £3.00
FB36 Pond Life 4 ..... £3.00
FB37 Roman Britain 2 ..... £2.00
FB38 Roman Britain 3 ..... £2.00
FB39 Cricket 1 ..... £1.60
FB40 Cricket 2 ..... £1.60
FB41 Cricket 3 ..... £1.60
FB42 Cricket 4 ..... £1.60
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FB45 Botanical Gardens 3 (stuart) £1.70
FB45a Botanical Gardens (stewart) £1.70
FB46 Botanical Garden 4 ..... £1.70
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FB53 Gilbert & Sullivan 3 ..... £4.00
FB54 Marine Life 2 ..... £4.00
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FB57 Aircraft 3 ..... £3.75
FB58 Aircraft 4 ..... £3.75
FB59 Archaeology 1 ..... £1.50
FB59a Archaeology 1 (Revised) £1.95
FB60 Archaeology 2 ..... £1.50
FB61 Archaeology 3 ..... £1.20
FB62 Archaeology 4 ..... £1.70
FB63 Sheriffs £1.50
FB64 Postal History 1 ..... £1.30
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FB66 Postal History 3 ..... £1.30
FB67 Postal History 4 ..... £1.30
FB68 Coaching Inns 1 ..... £1.40
FB69 Coaching Inns 2 ..... £1.40
FB70 Coaching Inns 3 ..... £1.40
FB71 Coaching Inns 4 ..... £1.40
FB72 Sea Charts 1 ..... £1.40
FB73 Sea Charts 2 ..... £1.40
FB74 Sea Charts 3 ..... £1.80
FB75 Sea Charts 4 ..... £1.80

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FD2 1978 1 Horse Shoeing	£30.00	£2.50
FD3 1978 2 Thatching	£160.00	£2.50
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FD5 1978 4 Wheel-making	£5.00	£3.00
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FD7 1979 Kedleston Hall	£5.00	£5.00
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80p Booklets

FE1 1979 1 Vickers Gun	£2.00	£2.00

85p Booklets

FF1 1976 Plain	£5.00	£6.50

90p Booklets

FG1 1977 Plain	£3.00	£4.75
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FG3 1978 2 Llangollen	£2.80	POR
FG4 1978 3 Kennet & Avon	£9.00	£7.00
FG5 1978 4 Caledonian	£4.00	£3.00
FG6 1979 5 Regents	£9.00	£5.00
FG7 1979 Tramway Museum	£6.00	£6.00
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£1.00 Booklets

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FH2b Sopwith Camel RM £2.20
FH3a Hawker Fury LM £3.00
FH3b Hawker Fury RM £3.00
FH4a Hurricane LM £2.20
FH4b Hurricane RM £2.20
FH5 Musical Instruments 1 ..... £2.40
FH6 Musical Instruments 2 ..... £2.40
FH7 Musical Instruments 3 ..... £2.40
FH8 Sherlock Holmes 1 ..... £2.40
FH9 Sherlock Holmes 2 ..... £2.40
FH10 Sherlock Holmes 3 ..... £2.40
FH11 Sherlock Holmes 4 ..... £2.40
FH12 London Zoo £2.60
FH13 Charles Dickens 1 ..... £3.00
FH14 Charles Dickens 2 ..... £3.00
FH15 Charles Dickens 3 ..... £3.00
FH16 Charles Dickens 4 ..... £8.00
FH17 Marine Life 3 ..... £3.40
FH18 Mills 1 (matt) £3.50
FH19 (Glossy) £8.50
FH20 Mills 2 ..... £5.50
FH21 Mills 3 ..... £2.40
FH22 Mills 4 ..... £2.40
FH23 Punch 1 ..... £2.20
FH23a Punch 1 (revised text) £1.80
FH24 Punch 2 ..... £1.80
FH25 Punch 3 ..... £1.80
FH26 Punch 4 ..... £1.80
FH27 Sheriffs £1.80
FH28 Educational Institution 1 ..... £3.50
FH29 Educational Institution 2 ..... £3.50
FH30 Educational Institution 3 ..... £3.50
FH31 Educational Institution 4 ..... £3.50
FH32 Prime Ministers 1 ..... £1.70
FH33 Prime Ministers 2 ..... £1.70
FH34 Prime Ministers 3 ..... £1.70
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FH37 II World War 2 ..... £1.70
FH38 II World War 3 ..... £1.70
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FH41a New Style 1p/20p/26p (corrected) £3.50
FH42 New Style 1p/20p/26p Photo £17.50
FH43 1p/2p/19p/26p £4.50
FH44 1st/2nd Postcode £5.00
FH44a 1st/2nd Postcodes £6.00

£1.15p Booklets

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FI2 1981 6 Lightning	£2.70	£2.70
FI3 1981 1 Nat. Hist Mus.	£2.70	£2.70
FI4 1981 2 Nat. Museum Scotland	£2.70	£2.70

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FJ3 1980 4 Bottle Kilns	£2.80	£2.80
FJ4 1986 Pillar Box	£4.00	£4.00
FJ5 1986 National Gallery	£3.80	£3.80
FJ6 1986 Graphology 'Maybe'	£3.80	£3.80

£1.25p Booklets

FK1 1982 3 Ashmolean	£2.40	£2.40
FK2 1982 4 Cardiff	£2.40	£2.40
FK3 1982 5 Belfast	£2.40	£2.40
FK4 1982 6 York Museum	£2.40	£2.40
FK5 1983 1 Railways	£3.60	£3.60
FK6 1983 2 Railways	£4.00	£4.00
FK6a 1983 Railways 2 (Corrected)	£70.00	£120.00
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£1.30p Booklets

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FL3 1984 1 Trams	£2.60	£2.60
FL4 1985 2 Trams	£3.00	£3.00
FL5 1985 3 Trams	£3.00	£3.00
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FS3 1983 Cotswolds	£3.00	£3.00
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FT2 1985 Letters Abroad	£3.20	£3.20
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FT5 1985 Pillar Box	£3.00	£3.00
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DQ68 1972 December £3.80
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1966 Christmas presentation pack (number PP15); and the 2013 Children's Christmas presentation pack (PP465)

CHRISTMAS PACKS

Festive fun!

PACKS & CARDS

The countdown to Christmas gets into full swing once Royal Mail have released their festive stamp set, writes Amanda Grieve. The first Christmas pack was in 1966 and features the first ever commemorative Christmas stamps. The stamps had been designed by children as part of a national Post Office competition (PP15). Inside the pack, there are details of eleven other designs, which were commended by the judges. They also ran a similar competition in 1981, this time promoted on the TV programme *Blue Peter*. The winning paintings were used on the stamps with the names and ages of the artists shown on the stamps (PP112).

More recently in 2013 the Royal Mail decided to run a nationwide competition to celebrate the joy of Christmas. Inside the pack are details of the 24 shortlisted entries with the two winning paintings used on the 1st and 2nd Class stamps (PP465). This was an extra Christmas pack that year with the other issue showing the iconic images of the Madonna and Child (PP466).

Royal Mail designers have often developed the inside of the presentation pack format for their festive issues, such as incorporating an advent calendar in the 2010 Christmas with Wallace and Gromit issue (PP423), and the 1998 Christmas pack (PP257) which included a cut-out 3D angel.

The 1994 Christmas issue (PP220) celebrated the nativity scene and featured Carlo Dolci's painting 'Adoration of the Magi' inside. There are advent calendar-type doors on each of the people represented on the painting and behind the doors are children dressed as nativity characters.

Hopefully the Royal Mail will continue to add these extra surprises in their festive presentation packs, as they are loved by children and adults alike!

Discover more about Christmas Packs by checking out the Packs & Cards website www.PacksAndCards.com or call: 01252 360530; email info@packsandcards.com; Packs & Cards, Oaklands House, Reading Road North, Fleet, Hampshire GU51 4AB.



Christmas presentation packs from 1994 (number PP220) and 1981 (PP112)

POSTMARKS

The Tailteann Games

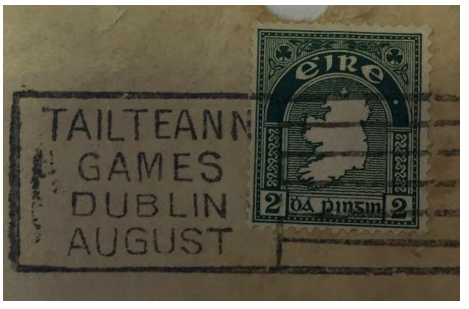
The Tailteann Games of 1924 were an attempt to show the world a measure of unity after a period of revolution and civil war, which brought about the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922, writes David Gwynn. In an effort to promote an Irish sense of identity, inspiration was sought in the Ireland that existed before the Normans arrived. The original Tailteann Games had begun, according to legend, in 632 BC when the funeral of Queen Tailte was marked with friendly sporting competitions. The week-long games began a tradition that lasted until 1169, when the arrival of Norman invaders brought an end to many Irish traditional activities.

A revival of the games was mooted for 1922, but the civil war of that and the following year meant the idea did not become a reality until 1924. After much wrangling at the highest level, the Games opened on 2 august and lasted until the 17 August. There was a remarkable list of sports including billiards and chess!

A cultural element ran alongside the sports, with competitions for dancing, poetry, music and painting. The postmark slogan shown was just one element of the publicity surrounding the games. The whole event was a considerable success, and was repeated for the games of 1928. In 1932, however, the games were reduced in length, and were criticised by some for being too 'parochial'. These were the last to be held.



The name has been revived in modern-day Ireland for athletics meetings for school age youngsters.





V-Mail Christmas Pictorials sent home by American soldiers in the 1940s

POSTAL STATIONERY

What was V-mail?

In 1942 the United States Postmaster General included the following in a public statement to the American public, writes Ed Fletcher:

'The Post Office, War Department and Navy Department know that the good effect of expeditious mail service on those of us at home is immeasurable. We realize fully that frequent and rapid communication with parents, loved ones and friends strengthens fortitude, enlivens patriotism, makes loneliness endurable, and inspires to even greater devotion the men and women who are carrying on our fight far from home.'

It was that last phrase 'far from home' that exercised the minds of all top officials involved with the logistics of transporting US overseas mail at that time. The nation had been at war for just a few months when the Postmaster General spoke; but already he and his colleagues were aware that as the conflict progressed up to 10,000,000 men and women might eventually be called up; and that all of them would be sending and receiving letters and parcels to and from home; in fact the 1945 figure for US men in uniform topped 12,000,000. Distances would also greatly increase as the Pacific War pushed its frontier towards Tokyo, 6,000 miles westward; and the European war battled to the ultimate goal in Berlin, 4,000 miles to the east. Vast amounts of fuel and space aboard ships and aircraft would be taken up by the private correspondence sure to be generated, unless something was done to reduce bulk and weight.

The answer came from history, as it so frequently does. It was recalled that more than seventy years earlier American newspapermen were among the residents of Paris encircled by the Germans during the siege of 1870-71; and that intrepid correspondents had filed their copy by using the microfilm-and-balloon airmail route out of Paris that enabled astonishing numbers of letters to reach the outside world. The US Postmaster would also have known that the British fighting in North Africa and the Far East had begun their Airgraph service for military mail in 1941. Our American allies decided to copy it with what became their Victory Mail service, soon abbreviated to V-Mail.

Pads of V-Mail forms were issued free to servicemen, and sold cheaply to civilians. Once completed they were handed in, reduced in size so that a seven-ounce roll of film could accommodate 1,500 letters. Enlarged at the other end of their journey, they reached addressees within a few days.



POST & GO

Christmas issues

In the autumn of 2012 Royal Mail were asked to provide a Christmas Post & Go stamp, rather than issue a new set the decision was made to reintroduce the Robin stamp from the 'Birds 1' originally issued in 2010. So on 6 November, 2012 the Christmas Robins were issued, with a full set from 1st Class to Worldwide to 40g, in a collector strip,available from most Wincor Nixdorf machines Nation-wide. All these stamps had been previously issued, but for the first time a date code had been concealed in the background, where 'ROYAL MAIL' had been changed, in only one position, to 'ROYAL MA12'. The stamps were issued on the same day as the commemorative Christmas stamps.

On 16 November, the first ever pop-up 'Christmas Post Shop' opened, at Camden's Stables Market, in London. As well as selling retail and collectable items it offered a gift-wrapping service with donations going to the BBC's Children in Need. Also for the first time we saw two new Post & Go machines: A3 and A4 with the datastring 'ANGB12 A3' or 'A4'. From 3 to 20 December, 2012 the BPMA's machine A1 dispensed the Robins with their 'The B.P.M.A.' overprint.

The Robin stamps returned in 2013, with the date code 'MA13', from kiosks in the post offices, the BPMA and at the Stafford stamp fair from A3 and A4 on the 8 and 9 November. Following the success of Camden, instead of a single pop-up shop this year saw a nationwide pop-up tour, starting in Newcastle upon Tyne on 20 November, then on to Glasgow, Liverpool, Birmingham, Cardiff, Croydon, Covent Garden and finishing at London Westfield on 19 December.

Last year we were treated to a full set of Post & Go Christmas stamps in the third series of British Flora, entitled 'Winter Greenery'. With the introduction of the NCR machines during the year we were able to have 1st and 2nd Class issues. With only two images for the 1st Class range (up to Worldwide to 60g, as it was then) and two images for the 2nd Class that gave us a total of sixteen new stamps, but then there were still some of the old Wincor Nixdorf machines working, as well as the BPMA with their overprint. There is also the range of 'errors'; the 1st and 2nd Class rolls were loaded on the wrong printers thus producing a range of 2nd Class with 1st Class images and vice-versa.

On 3 December, 2014 machines A003 and A004 were trialled at Crewe and Bradford North Enquiry Offices, respectively, dispensing the Christmas Post & Go stamps until the end of January 2015.

This year sees a new Christmas set, 'Winter Fur & Feathers', similar to 2014. There are two images for the 1st Class strip and two for the 2nd Class strip, giving a total of sixteen new stamps.

Buying British Stamps

Current Market Values



BUYING GB DECIMAL STAMPS 1971 TO 2015

(Always buying GB but do check website for latest prices prior to sending)

FACE VALUES (FV)	Buy % of FV	If Possible
Stamps 1p to 26p	47%	Sorted by value
Stamps 27p to 34p	53%	Sorted by value
Stamps 35p to 68p	60%	Sorted by value
Stamps 69p to 99p	65%	Sorted by value
Stamps £1.00p to £1.49	70%	Sorted by value
Stamps £1.50 to £2.99	75%	Sorted by value
Stamps £3.00 to £10.00	78%	Sorted by value
U/M Decimal Collections	60%	from 1971 to 2015
First (1st) Class NVI Stamps	55%	Commemoratives (lick and stick gum)
First (1st) Class NVI Stamps	60%	Commemoratives (self-adhesive gum)
First (1st) Class NVI Stamps	65%	Definitives (lick and stick gum)
First (1st) Class S/A NVI Stamps	70%	Definitives (self-adhesive gum)
Second (2nd) Class NVI Stamps	65%	Commemoratives (all types)
Second (2nd) Class NVI Stamps	67%	Definitives (lick and stick gum)
Second (2nd) Class S/A NVI Stamps	70%	Definitives (self-adhesive gum)
First Class LARGE NVI	75%	
Second Class LARGE NVI	75%	
Signed For & Special Delivery Stamps	75%	
Europe NVI Stamps	60%	All types
Worldwide NVI Stamps	60%	All types
Presentation Packs	50%	from 1971 to 1990
Presentation Packs	55%	from 1991 to 2000
Presentation Packs	60%	from 2001 to 2013
Presentation Packs	65%	2014 & 2015
Prestige Booklets	50%	for books up to £5 face value
Prestige Booklets	55%	for books up to £5.01 to £10 face value
Prestige Booklets	60%	for books over £10 face value
Booklets with Stamps up to 27p	47%	folding & retail etc
Booklets with Stamps from 28p to 39p	55%	folding & retail etc
Booklets with Stamps from 40p to 68p	60%	folding & retail etc
Smiler Sheets	60%	Lick & Stick Gum
Smiler Sheets	65%	Self-adhesive Gum
1st & 2nd Class Post Paid Envelopes	35%	postal stationary

BUYING CHANNEL ISLANDS & ISLE OF MAN

Guernsey & Alderney	20%	Tidy in sets or sheets, albums
Jersey	20%	Tidy in sets or sheets, albums
Isle of Man	30%	

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(For full list of foreign buying prices please visit website)

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Germany	£50	per 100 euros
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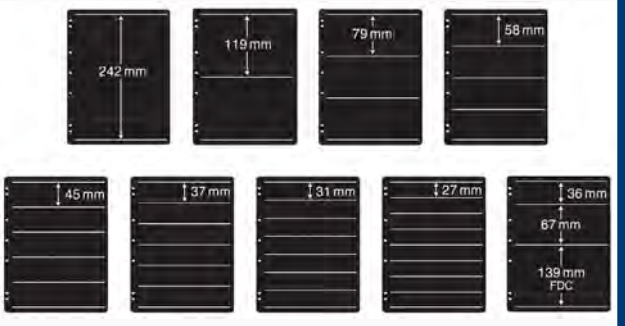
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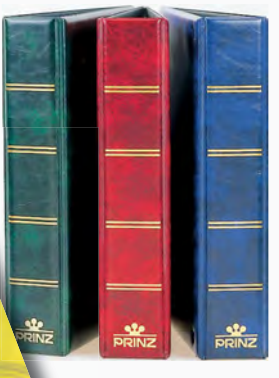
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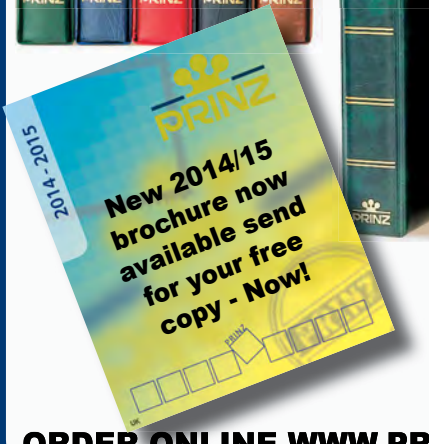
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FIRST DAY COVERS

Collecting the Bard

St George's Day 1964 also marked the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, and we show here a First Day Cover produced by the Alveston Manor Hotel in the bard's home town of Stratford, writes Brian Austin.

These unusual illustrations are becoming very collectable, the question with this one is, was it produced specially to mark the anniversary or were a few everyday envelopes just postmarked? The issue would have made a lovely publicity mail-shot for the hotel, but putting a full set on each would have been expensive and this cover is addressed straight back to the hotel so we just don't know.

If you are looking for unusual illustrations on this issue make sure you hunt out the Connoisseur Covers. With most of them in the bottom right hand corner you normally see Anne Hathaway's cottage, but covers are also available with an illustration of Mary Arden's House, Hall's Croft, The Memorial Theatre and Holy Trinity Church. In fact there may be more and if you collect them with both the ordinary and phosphor stamps you will soon be filling an album with this issue alone.



It may be that the people at Connoisseur decided to do a range of covers for this issue as it also saw the first GPO First Day Cover. It is intriguing to note that it took so long for the GPO to issue an FDC, perhaps they saw selling mint stamps as the priority and did not take collecting FDCs seriously.

FORGERIES

A collector's copy

Bosnia and Herzegovina came into being when Austro-Hungarian forces occupied the Bosnian district from the Ottoman Empire in 1878, writes Keijo Kortelainen. Though the state was abolished at the end of the First World War, many of its 150-plus stamp issues have been the target of forgers. Our example is the 1912 12 Heller pictorial stamp 'A view from Jajce'.

The 1906-1912 pictorial series, designed by duo Koloman Moser and engraver Ferdinand Schirnboeck, is one of the key issues that re-defined stamp design in the early 20th century. The original stamps are sharply recessed by Wien Staatsdruckerei (Vienna State Printing Office) with line perforation of approximately 12½. Just like with the Austrian stamps of the time, they were printed and perforated wet, and when the sheets dried, the stamps shrunk a bit, causing a flow of minor dimension and perforation varieties. Imperforate copies were privately issued by the printer.

The forged copy was printed using typography. The lines and corners of the design protrude, and the design appears distorted and smudgy when compared to the original. The forgery is line perforated 11½, though imperforate varieties are known. The key characteristic is the inscription 'FAKSIMIL', meaning facsimile, on the bottom left. However, this can easily be hidden with a fake cancellation.



The bottom example is a copy, denoted by the small 'FAKSIMIL' text in the left corner; some examples of the copy use a fake postmark to obscure this text

The maker of the facsimile is unknown, but some kind of connection to stamp dealing is likely. The original stamp was sold and valid only for a fixed period of seven months from 1 July to 31 December, 1912, and as such is somewhat uncommon as mint and cancelled-to-order, and even harder as genuinely used. It's more than likely these forgeries were originally created as cheap space fillers for collectors, but ultimately over the years they've taken up the space as genuine stamps in a number of old collections.



The Nativity

Royal Mail's 2015 Christmas stamps portray the Nativity story through six powerful impressionist style drawings which tell this age-old story in a fresh way

It's a story we've heard so many times – recounted to us through the words of numerous Christmas carols and the Nativity plays we took part in at school and then perhaps watched our own children perform. The Nativity story is over 2,000 years old and this simple tale of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus is a cornerstone of the Christian faith; and familiar to people of other faiths and none.

The stamp drawings use an impressionist style to convey the Nativity story

Stamp details

Issue date: 3 November
Stamp design: Studio David Hillman
Stamp illustration: David Holmes
Size (standard): 24mm x 28mm
Size (large): 34mm x 28mm
Printer: De La Rue Security Print
Print process: Gravure
Perforations: 14.5 x 15
Phosphor: Bars as appropriate
Gum: Self adhesive
2nd – The journey to Bethlehem
1st – The birth of Jesus
£1 – The animals of the Nativity
£1.33 – Shepherds on the hillside
£1.52 – The Three Wise Men
£2.25 – The angel announces the birth of Jesus

In keeping with the established tradition of issuing religious-themed Christmas stamps every other year, Royal Mail has called upon the services of London-born artist David Cecil Holmes, who designed one of the London 2012 Olympic stamps; and Studio David Hillman, which created thirty Olympic and Paralympic stamps for Royal Mail.

Depicting the Nativity story in a unique way is a challenge faced by Royal Mail each time the religious Christmas stamps are issued – the cast of characters in the Nativity will always remain the same; Mary and Joseph, baby Jesus, the shepherds and the three wise men. The last religious Christmas stamps, in 2013, focused simply on Mary, the mother of Jesus, but this year it's back to the Nativity story, told through six stamps which use rich colours and simple silhouette imagery to show the journey from a carpenter's house in Bethlehem through to the announcement of the birth of a king by a 'celestial host', as witnessed by a group of incredulous shepherds.

Journey to Bethlehem (2nd) begins the Nativity story and here, Mary and Joseph are shown embarking upon the 111km trip from their home in Nazareth, little realising that the birth of their child Jesus will force them to flee to Egypt and it will be several years before they return to their home village.

The use of silhouette imagery on each of the stamps is a powerful way to convey the story, allowing us to view the scene from afar and see the faces of the characters only in our imagination.

The birth of Jesus

Next, we move on to the birth of Jesus (1st) which is shown with the baby lying in a manger, as depicted in Luke's Gospel. Mary and Joseph watch over their newly born son, unaware that his humble birth will soon attract the attention of others awake on that night. The outdoor scene, under a starry sky, is at odds with the majority of Nativity scenes, which show the birthplace as an animal shed or outbuilding.

Stamp three, Animals of the Nativity







(£1.00) sees us move away from traditional territory; none of the four Gospels mention the presence of any animals at Jesus's birth – a fact that may surprise many, as thousands of Christmas cards and paintings over the centuries have shown baby Jesus watched over by animals such as cattle. Perhaps the Victorian carol 'Away in a Manger' has also perpetuated this myth, with its lyrics of 'cattle lowing'. The stamp shows a camel and sheep standing beside a palm tree under a purple night sky studded with stars; even without any human characters present, the Christmas connection is clear.

The news of Jesus's birth is about to be announced on The Shepherds (£1.33) which shows two men keeping watch over their sheep on a hillside. An angel appears to announce that a new king is born, prompting them to rush down into the town to find the baby. It is the shepherd story which has led some commentators to suggest that Jesus's birth must actually have been in springtime rather than in December, as only new-born lambs require an all-night vigil.

Visitors from the East

But the shepherds would not be Jesus's only visitors. Three Wise Men (£1.52) introduces visitors from 'the east' who had been alerted to the remarkable birth months before it happened, whilst making a study of the constellations, according to the Gospel of Matthew.

As countless carols and Christmas stories tell, the three wise men followed the star (an event shown on the stamp) which led them to the tyrant ruler King Herod. Hiding his rage at the possibility of a rival king in his territory, Herod urged the wise men to find the new king and report back to him so that he could see the baby for himself. The wise men, not taken in by his charm, did indeed visit Jesus with their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, but returned to their homeland by a different route.

The final stamp (£2.25) is titled The Annunciation and takes us back nine months before the birth of Jesus, as Mary receives a visit from the Angel Gabriel, who tells her she will bear a child. The stamp shows Mary looking up into the night sky as the angel, symbolised by a dove on this stamp, brings her the extraordinary news.

As usual with seasonal stamps, Royal Mail have issued 1st and 2nd Class deisgns in normal and 'Large' size

Bethlehem connections

In what has now become an established Royal Mail tradition with the religious Christmas stamps, the first day of issue postmark is Bethlehem, Llandeilo – a small village in Carmarthenshire which receives an influx of visitors each year on the run up to Christmas, eager to have their Christmas mail postmarked with the seasonal name. The pictorial Bethlehem postmark features the skyline of the Biblical Bethlehem, whilst the Tallents House stamp has the Christmas star. There is also a simple non-pictorial postmark which reads 'First day of issue, Bethlehem, Llandeilo'.

The presentation pack, designed by Together and illustrated by David Holmes, includes seasonal meditations by Dr Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury and now Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge. The topics covered include the Star of Bethlehem, shepherds, angels, the flight to Egypt and Christmas globes, all illustrated by David Holmes.

The First Day Cover, designed by Together, features a watercolour illustration that complements the stamps, alongside the title of the stamp issue, 'Christmas 2015', whilst the filler card has been designed by Together and illustrated by David Holmes. It includes an image of the journey to Bethlehem and a paragraph about the significance of the Star of Bethlehem written by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams.

For your chance to win one of ten Christmas 2015 presentation packs, courtesy of Royal Mail, simply answer the question below:

Which of the four gospels is the only one to mention the Three Wise Men?

Enter online at: www.stampandcoinmart.co.uk

Closing date: 10 December, 2015. Postal entries also accepted, please quote code SCM2083. Winner picked at random from correct entries. Editor's decision is final.

WIN THE STAMPS!

☛ *Continued from PAGE 23:* **How to Build a Good Stamp Collection?**

Perhaps then they realise that ***only*** some of what they may have glistening is 'gold'. Indiscriminate internet auction bidders buying 1,000's of low price items … may have spent large sums IN TOTAL … but may not have created desirable collections. The cost of a low priced item is the labour and cost of selling it. Nothing changes when that item comes to being re-sold.

TIP 5). **Now let's look at Public Auction.** Yes – you will be hard pressed to find a Public Stamp Auction that does not accept on-line / live internet bidding. As with 'Pure Internet' stamp sales – and perhaps even more so – 'Caveat Emptor' (buyer beware becomes even more the mantra. Generally individual lots may have higher average values so that lots offered are often higher value collections, accumulations or higher value sets / singles / rarities. Such auctions are the 'haunts' of dealers and astute buyers … but risk is attached, plus the absence of guarantees and the pernicious unpleasant buyer's premium + other charges which at certain auctions can convert a £1000 stamp purchase into as much as an invoice for £1,300.

TIP 5a).There are bargains to be had – but it is very much a 'big boys' playing field. Some of these auctions deliberately under-estimate lots that they know are worth far more … so that they can then have the dubious pleasure of publicising that a £1,000 estimated lot realised £10,000, when perhaps their knowledge suggested it should have been estimated at upwards of £5,000 in the first place … (hence – how wonderful they are).

TIP 5b). For certain types of lots such as actual Collections offered fairly intact the absence of guarantee combined with unreliable estimate means that for those who do not physically view a Public Stamp Auction and bid 'blind' – this is a dangerous place to be. Of course this may work to the advantage of an astute bidder who is actually present to physically view lots in the auction room. Historically that person was usually a Dealer. Perhaps less so these days.

TIP 6). **Finally we come to look at Postal Auctions/ Mail-Bid Sales.** First I must profess that I have an interest in a Mail-Bid / Postal Auction Sale. My company U P A conducts the largest postal auctions in the U K … What should the Collector or Dealer be looking for here?

TIP 6a). Most ***good*** Postal Auctions including U P A offer Collectors a **No Quibble Refund Guarantee (NQRG)** … and by 'No Quibble' I mean ***NO QUIBBLE***. Look for this – it is crucial. You are probably not actually seeing the stamps before bidding … so no guarantee would mean unacceptable risk.

TIP 6b). Unlike Public Auctions most Postal Auctions 'break' many collections into smaller 'collector-sized' units so that you may find what you seek without having to purchase what you do not need - it follows that most of the stamps in most postal auctions may be owned by the company presenting the auction. It is not viable to sell low priced lots on a commission basis. Ask yourself why you may be asked to pay a buyer's premium? Is it actually a Vendor's lot or owned by 'The House'?

TIP 6c). The Buyer's Premium was introduced to 'split' cost between buyer and seller so that a 'low' seller's commission looks attractive (if you forget about the premium the buyer is paying for the seller's stamps). Be aware of this or deal with auctions not charging a buyer's premium. You are in control. You can bid anywhere that you find what you seek – but it is good to be aware and informed.

TIP 6d). Prices Realised are IMPORTANT. For some unknown reason – even some larger Postal / Mail-Bid Auctions still do not produce lists of what their lots sold for after the auction. Look for auctions providing this feature – it provides reassurance combined with a trackable 'snapshot' of current market values ***PLUS*** what is selling and what is not selling. You can learn such a lot from 'Prices Realised' – I study them each day.

TIP 7). Credit Cards. 75% of some auction sales are settled by credit / debit card. The Biggest in the land has no need to charge you for use of them … Sheer volume of business accesses lowest rates. Why are you paying a premium to use your card? Is the supplier making a profit upon the extra % you are charged to use your card?

TIP 8). Look for unique 'Collector friendly' benefits that turn the disadvantage of lots not being sold to your advantage. U P A, for example, has for the past 15 years offered their Unique Reducing Estimate System **(URES)** whereby lots are increasingly reduced in estimate price till sold – some have reached one penny and then sold. Approaching one million lots have been offered through this system.

TIP 9). Cost of Delivery is one of the most annoying hidden costs that collectors absolutely abhor. Look for transparency in this area.

TIP 10). Beware the Seller / Auction NOT including Insurance when sending your winnings.

And Finally We come to choice … and mind-set ?

TIP Without Choice we have nothing. So it follows that you need substantial choice to form a good, even great, stamp collection. You cannot do business when each time you 'visit' all you see is what you have seen before – stagnating stocks offered at prices that ensure continued stagnation. If choice is limited you'll never find philatelic items you need – or even that you were unaware of their existence. That's the joy of collecting. The thrill of the unexpected, the chance find. You need dealers that want to help and auctions that wish to serve – so, in stamps 'attitude is all'.

So when you're searching for a stamp auction compare it against your list above of what to look for and if and when you're offered a 'No Risk Free Trial' … please consider – take it Now ◆

☛ *Please go to Page 3 NOW for coupon*

SECURITY MACHINS

S.G.	NO SOURCE CODE, NO DATE CODE	U/M
U2911	50p Grey	0.90
U2912	£1 Magenta	1.75
U2913	£1.50	2.00
U2914	£2	2.50
U2915	£3	3.50
U2916	£5	6.00
	WITH SOURCE CODE AND DATE CODE	
U2917	50p MPIL MA10	1.70
U2917	50p MPIL M11L	1.70
	NO SOURCE CODE , WITH DATE CODE	
U2920	1p deep crimson M12L	0.20
U2920	1p deep crimson M15L	0.20
U2921	2p deep green M12L	0.20
U2921	2p deep green M14L	0.20
U2921	2p deep green M15L	0.20
U2922	5p dull red-brown M12L	0.30
U2922	5p dull red-brown M14L	0.30
U2922	5p dull red-brown M15L	0.30
U2923	10p dull orange M12L	0.30
U2923	10p dull orange MA13	0.40
U2923	10p dull orange M14L	0.40
U2923	10p dull orange M15L	0.40
U2924	20p bright green M12L	0.40
U2924	20p bright green MA13	0.60
U2924	20p bright green M14L	0.50
U2924	20p bright green M15L	0.50
U2925	50p slate M12L	0.90
U2926	68p deep turquoise-green M11L	1.30
U2926	68p deep turquoise-green M12L	3.20
U2927	76p bright rose M11L	1.40
U2927	76p bright rose M12L	3.20
U2928	78p M13L	1.40
U2928	78p MA13	2.50
U2928a	81p Emerald	1.30
U2929	87p yellow-orange	1.80
U2930	88p M13L	1.50
U2930	88p MA13	2.50
U2930a	97p Bluish Violet	1.80
U2931	£1 Magenta M11L	3.30
U2931	£1 Magenta M12L	2.40
U2932	£1 bistre-brown M12L	1.75
U2932	£1 bistre-brown M14L	2.00
U2932	£1 bistre-brown M15L	2.25
U2933	£1.10 yellow-olive M11L	2.20
U2934	£1.28 Emerald M12L	2.50
U2934	£1.28 Emerald MA13	3.50
U2934	£1.28 Emerald M14L	2.50
U2934a	£1.33 M15L	2.00
U2934b	£1.47 Lavender-Grey M14L	2.00
U2934c	1.52 Mauve M15L	2.25
U2935	£1.65 grey-olive M11L	2.75
U2936	£1.88 M13L	2.75
U2936	£1.88 MA13	3.75
U2937	£1.90 bright mauve M12L	3.20
U2938	£2 deep blue-green MA13	5.00
U2939	£2.15 Greenish blue M14L	3.00
U2940	£2.25 Deep Violet M15L	3.00
U2940a	£2.45 Emerald M15L	3.20
U2940b	£3.15 Turquoise M15L	3.85
U2940c	£3.30 Bright Magenta M15L	4.00
	NO SOURCE CODE, NO DATE CODE	
U2941	2nd	2.00
U2942	1st	2.00
U2943	2nd Large	1.80
U2944	1st Gold	2.00
	WITH SOURCE CODE, W/OUT DATE CODE	
U2945	2nd MBIL	2.00
U2946	2nd MRIL	2.75
U2947	2nd MTIL	1.50
U2948	1st MBIL	2.00
U2949	1st MCIL	1.50
U2950	1st MRIL	3.00
U2951	1st MSIL	2.75
U2952	1st MTIL	1.50
U2953	2nd YBLM	2.00
U2954	2nd FOYAL	2.00
U2955	1st YBLM	2.25
U2956	1st FOYAL	2.20

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S.G.	NO SOURCE CODE, WITH DATE CODE	U/M
U2957	2nd MA10	1.80
U2957	2nd M11L	1.80
U2957	2nd M12L	1.25
U2957	2nd MA13	1.25
U2957	2nd M14L	1.25
U2957	2nd M15L	1.25
U2958	1st MA10	1.50
U2958	1st M11L	1.75
U2958a	1st vermilion M12L	1.00
U2958a	1st vermilion MA13	1.40
U2958a	1st vermilion M14L	1.40
U2958a	1st vermilion M15L	1.40
U2959	2nd Large MA10	3.50
U2959	2nd Large MA11	1.60
U2959	2nd Large MA12	1.60
U2959	2nd Large MA13	1.60
U2959	2nd Large M14L	1.60
U2959	2nd Large M15L	1.60
U2960	1st Large MA10	2.75
U2960	1st Large MA11	1.85
U2960a	1st Large vermilion MA12	1.50
U2960a	1st Large vermilion MA13	1.70
U2960a	1st Large vermilion M14L	1.60
U2960a	1st Large vermilion M15L	1.60
	WITH SOURCE CODE AND DATE CODE	
U2961	2nd MBIL MA10	2.00
U2961	2nd MBIL M11L	2.30
U2961	2nd MBIL M12L	1.50
U2961	2nd MBIL M13L	1.50
U2961	2nd MBIL M14L	1.50
U2961	2nd MBIL M15L	1.50
U2962	2nd MPIL MA10	1.70
U2962a	2nd MRIL MA12	2.90
U2962a	2nd MRIL M12L	2.90
U2963	2nd MTIL MA10	1.85
U2963	2nd MTIL M11L	1.50
U2963	2nd MTIL M12L	1.30
U2963	2nd MTIL M13L	1.30
U2963	2nd MTIL M14L	1.30
U2963	2nd MTIL M15L	1.30
U2964	1st MBIL MA10	3.30
U2964	1st MBIL M11L	2.00
U2965	1st MCIL MA10	1.60
U2965	1st MCIL M11L	1.50
U2966	1st MPIL	1.30
U2966a	1st MRIL MA10	3.50
U2966a	1st MRIL MA12	2.50
U2967	1st MSIL MA10	1.50
U2967	1st MSIL M11L	2.00
U2968	1st MTIL MA10	2.75
U2968	1st MTIL M11L	1.50
U2968	1st MTIL M12L	3.00
U2968a	1st vermilion MBIL M12L	1.50
U2968a	1st vermilion MBIL M13L	3.00
U2968a	1st vermilion MBIL M14L	1.50
U2968a	1st vermilion MBIL M15L	1.50
U2968b	1st vermilion MCIL M12L	1.20
U2968b	1st vermilion MCIL M13L	1.00
U2968b	1st vermilion MCIL M14L	1.00
U2968b	1st vermilion MCIL M15L	1.00
U2968c	1st vermilion MRIL MA12	1.50
U2968c	1st vermilion MRIL M13L	1.65
U2968d	1st vermilion MSIL M12L	1.30
U2968d	1st vermilion MSIL M13L	1.50
U2968d	1st vermilion MSIL M14L	1.30
U2968d	1st vermilion MSIL M15L	1.30
U2968e	1st vermilion MTIL M12L	1.30
U2968e	1st vermilion MTIL M13L	1.30
U2968e	1st vermilion MTIL M14L	1.30
U2969	2nd MBI MA10	13.50
U2969	2nd MBI MA11	1.75
U2969	2nd MBI MA12	1.75
U2969	2nd MBI MA13	2.00
U2969	2nd MBI MA14	1.75
U2969	2nd MBI MA15	1.75
U2970	2nd MFI MA10	6.75
U2970	2nd MFI MA11	1.75
U2970	2nd MFI MA12	2.00
U2970	2nd MFI MA13	2.00
U2970	2nd MFI MA14	1.75
U2971	1st Large MBI MA10	2.75
U2971	1st Large MBI MA11	2.00
U2972	1st Large MFI MA10	4.25
U2972	1st Large MFI MA11	1.85
U2973	1st large vermilion BIL MA12	2.00
U2973	1st large vermilion BIL MA13	2.00
U2973	1st large vermilion BIL MA14	2.00
U2973	1st large vermilion BIL MA15	2.00
U2974	1st large vermilion FIL MA12	1.75
U2974	1st large vermilion FIL MA13	2.00
U2974	1st large vermilion FIL MA14	1.75
U2974	1st large vermilion FIL MA15	1.75

S.G.	WITHOUT DATE CODE	U/M
U2981	1st Recorded signed for	2.50
U2982	1st large Recorded signed for	3.00
	WITH DATE CODE	
U2983	1st Recorded MA10	8.00
U2983a	1st Royal Mail Signed For MA13	2.75
U2983a	1st Royal Mail Signed For M15L	2.75
U2984	1st large Recorded MA10	8.75
U2984a	1st Large Royal Mail Signed For MA13	3.00
U2984a	1st Large Royal Mail Signed For M15L	3.00
U2985	Spec.Del.100g MA10	7.75
U2985	Spec.Del.100g M14L	10.75
U2985	Spec.Del.100g M15L	10.00
U2986	Spec.Del.500g MA10	8.50
U2986	Spec.Del.500g M14L	10.50
	NO IRIDESCENT OVERPRINT	
U2991	1p Crimson	0.20
U2992	2p deep green	0.20
U2993	5p red-brown DLR	0.25
U2993	5p red-brown WALSALL	0.75
U2994	10p dull orange DLR	0.35
U2994	10p dull orange WALSALL	0.75
U2995	20p bright green	0.45
	WITH ORDINARY GUM	
U3001	2nd blue MRIL	2.25
U3002	1st gold MRIL	2.25
U3002	1st gold MMIL	1.50
U3005	68p MPIL	2.50
	ORDINARY GUM - LITHO	
U3010	1p Crimson MPIL M13L	0.40
U3010	1p Crimson MPIL M14L	0.40
U3010	1p Crimson MPIL M15L	0.40
U3011	2p Deep green MPIL M13L CARTOR	0.75
U3011	2p Deep green MPIL M13L ENSCHEDE	0.75
U3011	2p Deep green MPIL M14L CARTOR	0.75
U3012	5p Red-Brown MPIL M12L	0.75
U3012	5p Red-Brown MPIL M13L CARTOR	0.75
U3012	5p Red-Brown MPIL M13L ENSCHEDE	0.75
U3012	5p Red-Brown MPIL M15L DY13	0.75
U3012	5p Red-Brown MPIL M15L DY14	0.75
U3012b	5p MPIL M13L ELLIPSE AT TOP	0.75
U3013	10p Dull Orange MPIL M12L	0.90
U3013	10p Dull Orange MPIL M13L	0.90
U3013	10p Dull Orange MPIL M14L DY10	0.90
U3013	10p Dull Orange MPIL M14L DY11	0.90
U3013	10p Dull Orange MPIL M15L	0.90
U3014	20p Bright Green MPIL M12L	1.80
U3014	20p Bright Green MPIL M14L DY10	1.00
U3014	20p Bright Green MPIL M14L DY11	1.00
U3015	1st Gold MPIL M11L	2.75
U3016	1st Vermilion MPIL M13L	1.50
U3017	50p MPIL M13L ELLIPSE AT TOP	1.50
U3017	50p MPIL M15L	1.75
U3019	76p Bright Rose MPIL	3.00
U3019a	81p Turquoise MPIL M14L	7.00
U3020	87p Yellow-Orange MPIL	3.50
U3020a	97p Bluish Violet MPIL	1.75
U3021	£1 Brown MPIL M14L	1.75
U3021	£1 Brown MPIL M15L	1.75
U3022	£1.33 MPIL M15L	2.50
	DIAMOND JUBILEE	
U3271	1st No source code	1.00
U3271a	1st GUMMED MMND	2.75
U3272	1st MTND	1.25
U3273	1st MBND DLR	2.00
U3273	1st MBND WALSALL	3.50
U3274	1st MCND	1.40
U3275	1st MSND	1.40
U3276	1st Large No source code	1.80
U3277	1st Large LFE	1.80
U3278	1st Large LBE	1.80
3328	1st MPND - Gummed	1.50
3329	1st Brown - Gummed	1.25
	LONG REIGN	
	1st NO SOURCE CODE	1.00
	1st SOURCE CODE S	1.00
	1st SOURCE CODE C	1.00
	1st SOURCE CODE M	4.00

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STAR WARS SOUVENIRS

In the second part of our guide to Royal Mail's recently issued Star Wars stamps, we take a look at the many philatelic souvenirs issued to accompany the stamps themselves, giving collectors and film fans plenty to pursue



In addition to the twelve 1st Class stamps featuring Star Wars characters and the six-stamp miniature sheet showing off vehicles from the famous film franchise, as detailed in last month's magazine, Royal Mail have also produced a large selection of philatelic souvenirs, ranging from stamp sheets to framed gifts.

The first port of call for collectors is the presentation pack, which holds both the twelve 'character' stamps and the 'vehicles' six-stamp miniature sheet. The pack, priced at £12.35, features two full A4 sides – one dedicated to the dark side of the force, the other to the light side – of Star Wars facts, figures, imagery and information that, according to Royal Mail, 'will leave fans in Star Wars heaven'. Don't miss our competition, sponsored by Royal Mail, for your chance to win a presentation pack, see page 38 for details.



In addition to the stamps themselves, there is a range of related souvenirs, including special stamp sheets and first day covers

Many first day covers were created on 20 October, the day the Star Wars stamps were officially issued, by a host of cover producers including Royal Mail. There's a huge variety to choose from, featuring a varying number of the stamps and different artwork on the envelope itself – cover producers often commission new artwork for such items and get a number of the covers signed by related celebrities – and no doubt a covers album could be quickly filled with covers bearing just this stamp set.

Royal Mail's range of covers include two bearing the character stamps (£9.55 from Royal Mail) and vehicle mini-sheet (£5.02), respectively. Both envelopes feature a unique starscape scene showing an X-Wing being pursued by Imperial Tie Fighters. Inside the covers an information card outlines the Star Wars saga from its inception in 1977 to the present day; the information cards are also included with the stamp and stamp sheet souvenirs. The stamps on the covers are cancelled with

a lovely 'Alliance Starbird' postmark, while an 'Imperial Crest' cancel and a simple circular cancel from Elstree, Borehamwood, the home of Elstree Studios, are also available.

Three medal covers add a shine to a collection, featuring a coin-like medal on the front of each envelope. Each limited to 10,000 copies, the medal covers combine the stamps with a proof quality medal produced by Royal Mint exclusively for this product and 'housed within a clear plastic protective display window, enabling the front and rear of the medal to be viewed and admired'.







The first medal cover focuses on Star Wars battles, and features the nine stamps showing characters from the original six films. The unique 'AT-AT' postmark adds a nice touch, even if the AT-AT stamp itself is not included, and the medal replicates the medal awarded to Han Solo & Luke Skywalker (but not Chewbacca, as Star Wars fans will know) after the victory at the Battle of Yavin, which saw the destruction of the first Death Star, in the very first film. Inside the cover, the information card charts epic battles from the first six films: Battle of Naboo, Battle of Geonosis, Battle of Coruscant, Battle of Yavin, Battle of Hoth, and Battle of Endor.

The second medal cover bears the vehicles mini-sheet along with a unique Millennium Falcon handstamp and an illustrated scene showing Han and Chewbacca in the ship's cockpit. The medal itself shows an overhead view of the Millennium Falcon, along with the inscription 'THE FASTEST HUNK OF JUNK IN THE GALAXY' and the reverse shows a prototype version of the Tie Fighter.

A third medal cover brings all the twelve character stamps together, all cancelled by a Star Wars logo handstamp, with an illustration of the Tatooine landscape, Luke looking towards the dual sunset, on the envelope. The medal shows Yoda on one side and Darth Vader on the other, with the respective inscriptions: 'POWERFUL YOU HAVE BECOME THE DARK SIDE I SENSE IN YOU' and 'THE FORCE IS STRONG WITH THIS ONE'.

Medal covers add another aspect to the collectables, with the pieces featuring inscriptions based on quotes from the films

Royal Mail's Star Wars stamps and related souvenirs can be purchased from the special website: www.royalmail.com/starwars





Stamp variations

The stamps are also presented in a number of different formats, giving fans of the film the chance to select a particular favourite or add a range of stamps to their collection. Stamp sets, presented within a presentation card and secured in place by clear plastic strips, are available for the twelve character stamps and the vehicle mini-sheet. Sets featuring ten stamps of the same design are also available, priced at £6.50, for the stamps depicting Yoda, Darth Vader, Han Solo, and Boba Fett.

A larger stamp set comes in the form of a 'Heroes and Villains' A4 sheet featuring ten stamps (three of Yoda, three Darth Vader, two Stormtrooper, and two Han Solo) along with labels showing film stills from the Lucasfilm archives.

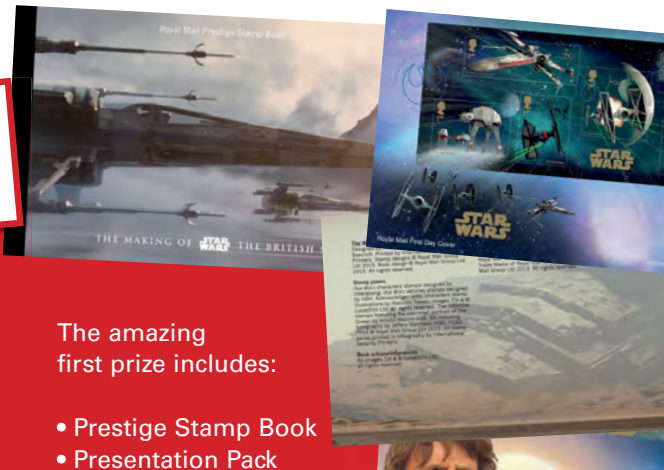
If the labels accompanying the stamps on the sheet are not to your liking, you can add your own with the Personalised Stamp Sheets. Featuring ten stamps of the same design (Vader, Yoda, Han or Stormtrooper), the sheet leaves space for your photo to be printed on to the labels. Priced at £10.20 per sheet (plus postage costs) the Smilers® stamp sheets by can be ordered through Royal Mail's Smilers® App or by visiting royalmail.com/smilers, choosing your stamp design and uploading your selected photography.

Framed souvenirs

While produced for use on postal items, many Star Wars stamps will take pride of place in albums or on walls, and a number of framed souvenirs are available. The vehicle mini sheet is beautifully framed with each stamp shown separately beneath and an image of X-Wings attacking the Death Star in the background; while all twelve character stamps are framed against the Tatooine landscape on another framed product; the final framed product, all of which are priced at £55, is the 'Heroes and Villains' stamp sheet, with Star Wars logo beneath.

While not so easy to display, many collectors will be keen to obtain the 26-page prestige stamp booklet (PSB) which 'explores the unique British contribution throughout the Star Wars phenomena'. The book is not issued until 17 December, to coincide with the release date of the new film *The Force Awakens*, and includes all twelve new Star Wars designs, together with other 1st Class stamps, including those showing the British flag to emphasise the nation's involvement in the film franchise.





WIN

We have a fantastic 'Millennium Falcon Bundle' of Star Wars stamps and souvenirs, worth £63, to give away to one lucky winner, courtesy of Royal Mail, while ten runners-up will receive a Star Wars presentation pack!

The amazing first prize includes:

- Prestige Stamp Book
- Presentation Pack
- Stamp Souvenir
- Stamp Sheet Souvenir
- Stamp Cards
- Collector Sheet

Which actress plays Princess Leia in the Star Wars films?

Enter online at: www.stampandcoinmart.co.uk

Closing date: 11 December, 2015. Postal entries also accepted, please quote code SCM2082. Winner picked at random from correct entries. Editor's decision is final.



Christmas comes to Britain

Over the past few decades we have seen all manner of seasonal stamps from Great Britain, including animated characters Wallace and Gromit, pantomime dames and winter scenes, but back in the 1960s the very idea of British Christmas stamps was met with concern from the authorities, as Paul Brittain reveals

Tony Benn wanted to issue Britain's first Christmas stamps in 1965, including a surcharge for charity. He had become Postmaster General in October 1964 and was probably aware that over the years the Post Office had received many requests for such stamps. The answer was that the Post Office did not mark annual occasions with stamps, which were reserved for major national and international events, plus royal and postal anniversaries. Although more stamps were being issued even prior to Benn's arrival, his officials still gave the answer 'no'.

Come the time to decide the 1966 stamp programme Benn had amended the criteria for new stamps, and was able to include Christmas. He wanted to have one set during the year designed by children, and his officials decided that Christmas was an appropriate occasion. The Post Office held a competition for children up to the age of fifteen.

There were some 5,000 entries with four designs short-listed, two used for the issued stamps (3d and 1s 6d) and one for the first day cover. Ironically, come the time to decide which entries to use, Tony Benn had been replaced by Edward Short as PMG. The stamps were issued on 1 November, 1966.

Even before the 1966 stamps were issued, it was agreed to have Christmas stamps again in 1967. Short decided he wanted a religious theme this time, and that the stamps should reproduce famous paintings. Essays were produced based on six paintings from which he made the final choice: Short also suggested that the value used for overseas cards sent by surface mail, the 4d, should be issued early, on 18 October, with the other two values, 3d and 1s 6d, issued on 27 November.



The 1966 Christmas stamps featuring children's drawings

Postmaster General Tony Benn was aware that over the years the Post Office had received many requests for Christmas stamps

Christmas now became accepted as part of the annual stamp programme, with several designers invited to submit ideas for 1968. Those by Rosalind Dease featuring children with their toys were selected. Interestingly all three stamps were issued on 25 November: the idea of issuing one of the stamps earlier has not been repeated.

By the time work needed to begin on the 1969 Christmas issue, yet another PMG was in office, Roy Mason. He was advised that the children's designs of 1966 had not been popular with the public, while many regretted that the 1968 designs were not religious. Mason therefore decided to adopt religious designs but not to reproduce paintings again. Instead professional designers were commissioned. On seeing those submitted the Stamp Advisory Committee unanimously agreed 'Fritz Wegner's designs had captured the religious element of the occasion much more than any of the others'. The values were to be 5d, 9d and 1s 6d, but the SAC felt strongly that those posting Christmas cards at 4d should not be denied using a Christmas stamp. Despite objections from Royal Mail at difficulties in segregating 1st and 2nd class mail if both bore special stamps, the SAC won the argument. The stamps, issued on 26 November, were 4d, 5d and 1s 6d.

There might not have been a Christmas set in 1970. Royal Mail was concerned about issuing special stamps in the months before and after decimalisation. However, such was the popularity of Christmas stamps that it was agreed to go ahead, again with a religious theme. The three designs, 4d, 5d and 1s 6d, issued on 25 November were the work of Sally Stiff and were based on the De Lisle Psalter. There were never doubts again: Christmas stamps are now an annual feature from Royal Mail.



Last year's colourful Christmas stamps; Since 1966 Royal Mail have issued seasonal stamps every year





GUERNSEY

Stained glass stamps

The designs of textile designer, artist, writer and socialist William Morris will be familiar to many stamp collectors. His textiles work appeared on a British stamp issue in 2011, while one of his stained glass windows appeared on a GB seasonal stamp in 2009. Now Guernsey are following suit with a set of seven stamps showing the stained glass windows at St. Stephen's church which were designed by Morris in the 1860s.

The firm Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. was established in 1861 and one of their earliest commissions was to produce designs for the windows of St. Stephen's. Work began on the church in 1862 on open fields which had been part of the de Beauvoir Estate. The church, which this year celebrated the 150th anniversary of its first service, is a superb example of Victorian Gothic architecture of the 13th century with long narrow windows and tall arches. With a wonderful selection of stained glass windows, St. Stephen's is known for having almost the only Morris windows in the Channel Islands.

Whilst Morris was responsible for the overall design of the windows he enlisted the help of other artists employed by his firm including Rosetti, Philip Webb, and Edward Burne-Jones for the scenes and figures. Of particular note, according to Guernsey Post, is the Jesse window, depicting the 'Tree of Jesse' which traces the lineage of Jesus and is generally considered to be one of Morris's finest pieces of work.

Meanwhile, the seasonal stamps issued for Alderney show stained glass windows at St Anne's church, dedicated to local woman Anne French, who spent her life to helping children both in the island and around the world.

Recognising her extensive charity work, the west window of St. Anne's church in Alderney was dedicated to Anne French on 21 July, 1957. The windows show scenes including Jesus with some Alderney children and St. Anne's church in the background; a scene from Africa, where Anne French and her husband worked and where they distributed books which were widely used in schools; and a Burmese boy and girl on steps leading from a pagoda. Other windows show medallions depicting children from around the world, reflecting that 'Alderney children are members of a world-wide community'.





Stamp details

Guernsey
William Morris Stained Glass Windows
Issue date: 6 November, 2015
Design: Two Degrees North
Printer: Cartor, offset lithography
Perforations: 14.25

Alderney
Anne French Stained Glass Windows
Issue date: 6 November, 2015
Design: Two Degrees North
Printer: Souther Colour Print, offset lithography
Perforations: 14.59
37p - medallions showing children
42p - Jesus with children
56p - medallions showing children
57p - African scene
62p - medallions showing children
68p - Bermuda scene
77p - medallions showing children

ISLE OF MAN

A Manx Xmas



The Isle of Man are marking the 250th anniversary of the first prayer book to be published in Manx Gaelic, with a set of five Manx Christmas Prayer Book stamps.

Each of the stamps, specially illustrated by local artist Julia Ashby-Smyth, feature a Manx word and a religious emblem closely associated with the spiritual aspects of Christmas and winter festival. The pack contains for the first time a £3.20 stamp for the Post Office parcels rate.

The words and images across the stamps draw upon the long history of the Manx Prayer Book. The concept of a Manx Gaelic Prayer Book, Book of Common Prayer was first translated by John Phillips, Bishop of Sodor and Man in 1610, when he interpreted the 1604 edition of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. The Manx edition to be published, however, used the 1662 English version of the Anglican Book of Prayer and was published under the auspices of the Society of Propagation of Christian Knowledge 250 years ago in 1765. Both translations were then brought together in 1893 with a two volume edition by Professor John Rhys and published by the Manx Society.

Artist Julia Ashby-Smyth has selected a series of recurrent and important words and matched these with graphic inspiration drawn from illuminated manuscripts and ecclesiastical texts and a 'Book of Hours' of the same period (late 18th century). The result is a reproduction of the colours and design elements used 250 years ago and, according to the Isle of Man's Sarah Reed, 'Julia captures a certain Manxness throughout the collection by linking traditional Manx Gaelic terminology which is perhaps familiar with well-known Manx graphic motifs including for example: the word "Shee" meaning "Peace" accompanied by an image of a white dove of peace, while "Graith" meaning "Love" is represented by an angel. "Grayse" meaning "Grace" is represented in motherhood with Mary and Jesus. "Credjue" meaning "Faith" is shown with a cross, and finally, "Strength", "Niart" in Manx is depicted as a Wiseman.'

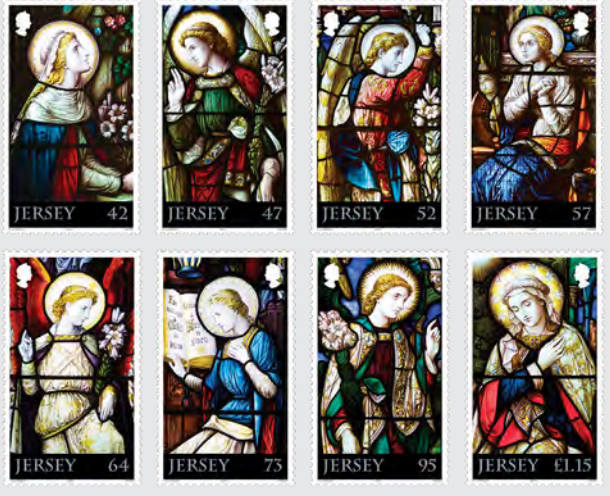
Maxine Cannon, General Manager of Isle of Man Stamps & Coins said: 'It's been a pleasure working with Julia on this project and to have produced such a fantastic and authentic set of Christmas stamps celebrating this important cultural anniversary. We are sure you will love seeing our festive stamps decorating your parcels, letters and packets this Christmas.'

Stamp details

Manx Christmas Prayer Book
Issue Date: 23 October, 2015
Illustrations: Julia Ashby Smyth
Design: EJC Design
Printer: Lowe Martin Group, off set lithography
Stamp size: 32 x 26mm

JERSEY

Henry Bodset's designs



Henry Thomas Bosdet was born in Jersey in 1856 and became famous for his stained glass windows, many of which can be found in Jersey's parish churches. According to Jersey Post: 'his work is celebrated not just for its richness in colour, but for the balance of composition combined with the quality of drawing in his portrayals of religious characters,' so it seems logical that Bosdet's work should be used on Christmas stamps.

Eight of Bosdet's Jersey window panes are featured on Jersey's stamp set, depicting the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary during the Annunciation. The tones used by Bosdet create the effect of the windows being in a constant state of change depending on the time of day or the light inside the church.

Bosdet was educated and lived in London for most of his life, but always maintained strong links with the island and its culture and as many as thirty of his windows are found in Jersey's churches. Several are also situated in the private chapel of St Ouen's Manor, one of Jersey's most significant historical landmarks.

The set of eight Christmas stamps feature sections from pairs of panes found in the parish churches of St Martin, St Helier, St Brelade and St Saviour.

Stamp details

Stained Glass Windows by Henry Thomas Bosdet
Issue date: 27 November, 2015
Printer: Cartor, offset lithography
Stamp size: 45mm x 26.53mm

42p - St Martin's Parish Church, Virgin Mary sits in profile
47p - St Martin's Parish Church, The Archangel Gabriel sits in profile
52p - Parish Church of St Helier, The Archangel Gabriel sits in profile
57p - Parish Church of St Helier, Virgin Mary sits in three-quarter profile with spinning wheel
64p - St Brelade's Parish Church, The Archangel Gabriel, holding a lily
73p - St Brelade's Parish Church, Virgin Mary before a lectern
95p - St Saviour's Parish Church, Archangel Gabriel, with a flaming halo
£1.15 - St Saviour's Parish Church, Virgin Mary seated, head inclined with eyes downcast



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Winter Relief in Germany

Germany's 'Winter Relief' stamps capture the nation at a pivotal moment. Raising funds for social welfare programmes and reflecting political posturing, the stamps create an intriguing collection, as Richard Tarrant explains

In 1924 Germany began an annual issue of surcharged stamps in support of the Deutsche Nothilfe (German Emergency Aid) social welfare programme. When Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany on 30 January, 1933, the Nazi Party set about transforming the country and controlling almost all aspects of life. This included postage stamps, which were one small part of Nazi Germany's use of propaganda.

The change was soon evident with the Deutsche Nothilfe stamp issues. Where they had previously consisted of between two and five stamps illustrating coats of arms and buildings, the 1933 issue comprised nine stamps. They marked fifty years since Richard Wagner's death and depicted scenes from his operas. Hitler greatly admired Wagner and was clearly influenced by his political writing and his music.

The stamps, which have been universally admired, were designed by Alois Kolb, a German etcher, painter and graphic artist. They were the first German stamps to feature a swastikas watermark. All the stamps were perforated 14 x 13, although the 4pf, 6pf, 8pf, 12pf and 20pf were also perforated 14 x 14. In addition, booklets were issued containing two panes. One pane had five 4pf and five 6pf stamps, the other five 8pf stamps and four 12pf stamps.

Stamps on sale

Initially, the stamps were on sale between 1 November, 1933 and 1 February the following year. They went on sale again in Munich and Bayreuth from June to August 1934 during the Wagner Festival. Each stamp had a surcharge that ranged from 2pf to 35fp. The surcharge for each stamp was reflected in the number of stamps issued, which varied from 5,220,555 of the 12f with a 3pf surcharge to just 264,238 of the 40pf value, which had a 35pf surcharge.

The 1934 Nothilfe issue also consisted of nine stamps but with a marked contrast in design with the 1933 issue. Each stamp depicted different occupations, namely a businessman, blacksmith, mason, miner, architect, farmer, scientist sculptor and judge. The stamps were of identical denominations to those of 1933, with identical surcharges and a booklet with the same denomination stamps. Again, the size of the surcharges was reflected in the numbers issued, with the 40pf + 35pf stamp totalling just 340,450.

There were ten stamps in the 1935 Nothilfe issue. The stamps were attractively designed, depicting women in regional costumes. Some of the denominations were different from those of the two previous issues, including the booklet stamps, and the total value of the surcharges had increased considerably. Two of the stamps could be regarded as propaganda. The 4pf + 3pf value

Left, from top: the 1933 Richard Wagner set, the 3pf + 2pf value showing a scene from *Tannhäuser*; 4pf + 2pf showing scene from *The Flying Dutchman*; 5pf + 2pf scene from *The Rhinegold*; 6pf + 4pf - scene from *The Mastersingers*; 8pf + 4pf, scene from *The Valkyries*; 12pf + 3pf, scene from *Siegfried*

Below: the 20pf + 10pf value from the 1933 Wagner set showing a scene from the opera *Tristan and Isolde*



depicted a costume of Silesia, which at the time was only part German, the Treaty of Versailles having given half of it to Poland, while the 5pf + 3pf value depicted a costume of the Rhineland, which at the time was a demilitarised zone under the Allied forces.

The 1935 set was the last of the Nothilfe series, being replaced by an annual issue of stamps in aid of the Winterhilfswerk (Winter Relief) programme. The aim of the programme that was held from October to March each year between 1933 and 1945 was to help poorer Germans during the winter months, giving them provisions such as food, clothing and coal. The movement was originally set up in 1931 by Heinrich Brüning when he was Chancellor of Germany, but Hitler was later to claim sole credit. The Hitler Youth and the League of German Girls conducted much of the collecting for the programme. While donations were voluntary, it became increasingly unsafe not to donate, with non-donors open to various forms of retribution.

An annual issue

Winter Relief stamps were issued annually from 1936 to 1940. Remarkably, each year's stamps had identical denominations, surcharges and booklet stamp denominations. They also had similar colours for each denomination, albeit with some shade differences.

The 1936 surcharged stamps in aid of Winter Relief charities sought to publicise modern architecture in the Third Reich by depicting a range of structures, many of which had been built since the Nazi Party had come to power. There were nine stamps but they had a rather lifeless appearance, showing structures with no people or traffic and little landscaping. A booklet was issued that contained four of the 3pf + 2pf stamps and five of the 12pf + 6pf stamps on one pane and five of the 5pf + 3pf and five of the 6pf + 4pf on the second pane.

The 1937 Winter Relief set was altogether more satisfactory than the previous year's issue, depicting ships in motion. The vessels illustrated included a lifeboat, a lightship, fishing smacks, a barque, a train ferry and four liners. Of particular interest is that for many years the 40pf stamp was thought to depict the SS *Bremen*, as advance notice



was given that it was to be featured on the stamp. In fact, it portrays the SS *Europa*, the result of the stamp designers being sent a photograph of this ship by mistake.

The designs of the 1938 stamp issue were novel in that they featured both sights and individual flower species. The sights and flowers were both of Austria, which had been forcibly incorporated into Germany earlier that year. The stamp designs worked well in combining picturesque scenery with flowers that included a carline thistle, a Spring pasque flower, a primula, an edelweiss, a cyclamen, a dog-rose, a rhododendron, a gentian and a crocus.

The 1939 and 1940 Winter Relief sets had similar content to the 1936 issue but escaped the cold, lifeless feel of the earlier set by including landscaping elements in the designs. The theme of both issues was buildings of the Third Reich. The 1939 stamps included castles and municipal buildings in Germany and Austria, while the 1940 stamps demonstrated the geographical spread of German influence by including buildings in Danzig, Prague, Thorn and Poznan, as well as buildings in Germany.

Although the Winter Relief programme continued unabated, the 1940 stamps proved to be the last in the Winter Relief series. Many of the following Third Reich surcharged stamps were for the benefit of the oxymoronically named 'Hitler's Culture Fund'. The only further philatelic reminder of the Winter Relief programme was a single 12pf + 38pf stamp issued on 10 September, 1943 to mark ten years of the programme.

Stamp details

Although the long Nothilfe set of Wagner stamps had only been issued on 1 November, 1933, a further Nothilfe issue was made just four weeks later on 29 November. It consisted of a miniature sheet issued to mark the tenth anniversary of Nothilfe. The sheet had four stamps identical to the first Nothilfe stamps issued on 25 February, 1924, except that the stamps were printed se-tenant on the sheet and were overprinted '1923-1933'.

The four stamps were gummed but the remainder of the sheet was ungummed. The stamps bore the swastikas watermark as used on the Wagner issue, while the sheet was watermarked '10 JAHRE/DEUTSCHE NOTHILFE/ 1923-1933'.

The miniature sheet cost 3.50 Reichmarks, although the stamps had a postal value of just 85pf. Around 64,000 sheets were printed. Stanley Gibbons catalogue prices unmounted mint sheets at £6,000, mounted mint sheets at £1,600 and used sheets at £11,000. An examination of auction realisations reveals a wide disparity of prices, with condition the main factor.

Above: a 12pf + 3pf value depicting a farmer from 1934's Nothilfe series

Right, from top: 25pf + 15pf, scene from Lohengrin; 40pf + 35pf, scene from Parsifal; 1939 Winter Relief series 6pf + 4pf value illustrating the Clocktower in Graz

Adolf Hitler was named Chancellor of Germany on 30 January, 1933. The leader's rise saw German society change almost overnight, with an increased intolerance towards any political opposition, an expansion of state police, and an increasingly extreme foreign policy. German stamps had previously shown national symbols and raised money for welfare, but from 1933 they began to reflect Hitler's warped idea of German culture







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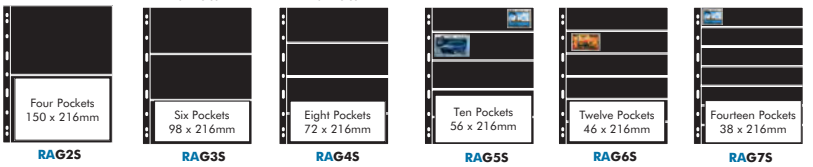
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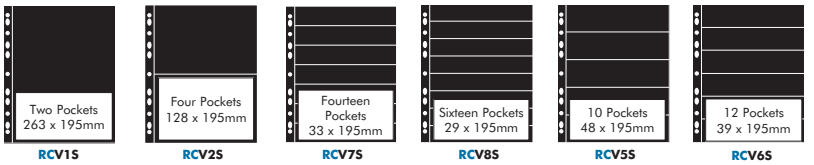
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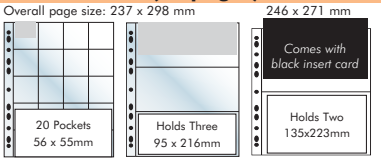
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REVOLUTION IN THE SOUTH

In the last issue of *Stamp & Coin Mart* we examined the stamps issued in Sardinia and the Northern Italian states before the unification of Italy. In the second part of our in-depth guide, David Bailey completes the picture with the Southern States of what is now Italy

The Second Italian War of Independence was fought on two fronts. In the north, Victor Emmanuel of Savoy fought against the Austrians. In the south, Garibaldi and the thousand challenged the ruling Bourbon dynasty. In the centre, the Papal States stood in the way of unification, for a time.

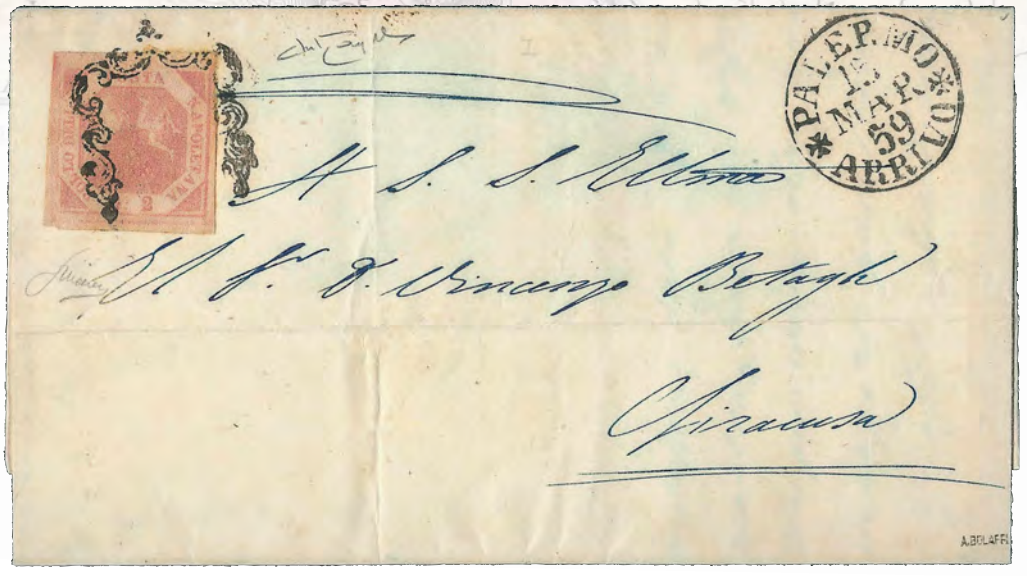
Once again, it's a story told in stamps.

Naples, January 1858

For complex historical reasons, early Italy ended up with two areas both calling themselves 'Sicily': the island itself and the vast tract of land stretching from the Abruzzi Mountains in the North East, down to Italy's toe in Calabria.

When the two were re-united under a Bourbon monarch, they became the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies but retained their own administrations and had separate capital cities at Naples and Palermo.

Both were late in producing stamps. The stamps of Naples appeared only in 1858; but instead of charging flat rates along British lines, the rate structure was based on the number of sheets in a letter or newspaper and then on weight for heavier items. The stamps were denominated in the Neapolitan currency in which 1 Ducato equalled 100 Grano or 200 Tornesi.



Naples, a fine, 4-margin copy of the 2g rose-carmine on an entire letter to Palermo. Unusually, it is cancelled by the 'horseshoe' cancel of Sicily, designed to save the face of King Ferdinand II. This important item was estimated at $2,000 - $3,000 (£1,320 - £1,980) in a recent Robert Siegel Auction

The design features the Fleur de Lys of the Bourbon family, the Horse of Naples and the three-legged Trinacria of Sicily, with a central face of Medusa. This differs from the Isle of Man symbol in that the legs are female and symbolise the three corners of the island.

The stamps were engraved by one G Masini, who incorporated the letters of his name into the design, by way of a secret mark; these are found in or around the value tablets and are unique in world philately. All seven values in the set were recess-printed in the same colour which is catalogued as Lake or Rose. This may have been chosen in imitation of Britain's 1d reds, or because it was a 'neutral' colour, with no political implications.

Printing plates of 100 stamps were made from both copper and steel.

The paper for the stamps features a magnificent watermark incorporating a border lettered 'Bolli Postali,' forty Fleurs de Lys and the papermaker's logo: the initials 'BJ.' The paper varies

dramatically in both thickness and finish. Generally, stamps show only a part of the Fleur de Lys watermark, and some are found without one. Stamps watermarked with the BJ logo are highly desirable. Stamps with clear impressions are rare.

There was no change to the design when King Ferdinand II (King Bomba) died in May 1859 and was succeeded by the young and inexperienced Francis II.

Enter Garibaldi

In April 1860, a peasant uprising broke out in Messina and Palermo. But it was running out of steam when Guiseppi Garibaldi was persuaded to support it in the name of Victor Emmanuel. General Garibaldi was a charismatic soldier of fortune who had led revolutionary armies in Brazil, Uruguay and in Italy itself. He landed in Marsala on 11 May with two ships and a poorly armed body of volunteers. These were called the Redshirts and later the Thousand. Local revolutionaries rallied to his flag and with 800 men, he gained a decisive victory over a much larger Bourbon force at the battle of Calatafimi on 18 May. He laid siege to Palermo from 27 May, where a British Admiral brokered a ceasefire and the peaceful evacuation of all the Bourbon forces. After the final Bourbon stronghold of Messina fell, all Sicily was his and with British help, his army crossed the Straits of Messina to land in Calabria on 18 August, 1860.

Once again, he had widespread support from all classes of society, all with their different (and sometimes incompatible) reasons. He entered Naples by train on 7 September, 1860, with no real opposition along the way. King Francis II had fled.

Garibaldi's occupation of Naples produced two new stamps. The most immediate need was for a ½ tornese stamp for newspapers and printed matter; this would match the low rate charged in Sardinia. Plate 2 of the ½ grano was altered by hand with the G changed to a T for all 100 stamps. It appeared in November 1860 and was printed in blue.

The next priority was to remove the Bourbon emblems and replace them with the cross of Savoy. So the plate was further modified, again by hand, so as above, there are 100 different varieties. The 'Croce' replaced the 'Trinacria' in December 1860, and the earlier stamp is one of the world's great rarities. Following a plebiscite, both Naples and Sicily became provinces of Sardinia as a step on the way to Italian unification.



Romagna, an impressive four-margined copy of the 1 Baj on Drab from the bottom right hand corner of the sheet. It is tied by a diamond grid cancel to a letter from Copparo to Farrara and was estimated at $1500 to $2,000 (£990 to £1,320) in a recent Robert Siegel Auction

Neapolitan Provinces, February 1861

This provisional set is similar to the stamps of Sardinia and was produced by Matraire in Turin. The main difference is the currency; they continue to use the Neapolitan system detailed above. However, Matraire produced them on his old litho presses: frames for the Sardinian stamps are printed letterpress.

A basic set comprises eight values, but there are the same variations in colour as we find in Sardinia alongside the same errors and varieties. So these stamps, too, can become a lifetime's study. In addition, postal forgeries were made of the 2g, 5g, 10g and 20g stamps and there are two errors of colour; both the ½t and the 2g can be found in black.

The decision to retain the old Neapolitan currency was only taken after a long and heated argument between Naples and Turin. This resulted in another set of five stamps, similar to the stamps of Sardinia but denominated in cents, which were produced in Naples. These are treated as 'unissued'.





Below, from left: Naples, a fine, 4-margin copy of the Trinacria (triangle) newspaper stamp, still showing part of the G, for granna as well as the T for Tornese. It sold for a hammer price of 2,800 CHF (£1,900) in a recent Corinphila Auction; Naples, the Croce newspaper stamp, now showing the Cross of Savoy instead of the Bourbon Arms of Naples. It sold for a hammer price of 950 CHF (£640) in a recent Corinphila Auction

Romagna, September 1859 Provisional Government

The success of Garibaldi in the South posed a problem for Victor Emmanuel of Sardinia and especially his Prime Minister Cavour. He could hardly oppose them, but did not entirely trust them. He therefore struck out for Rome with an unprovoked and uninvited attack on the Papal States to the East and South. In a shrewd, tactical move, this army was officially led by Victor Emmanuel himself. Romagna fell first, then the Marche and then Umbria, until the Pope had lost around two thirds of his territory.

Romagna was the only conquered province to issue stamps: a hastily-produced provisional set which would serve until a plebiscite was held. In June 1928, the currency was officially changed from the papal currency to cents and lire, but this was impossible to carry through in practice due to the chaotic conditions of the time, and so the stamps are denominated in scudi and bajocchi: 1s = 100 b.

There are ten stamps in the set, in black on tinted papers and they were printed by letterpress in Bologna. Specialists have identified a number of small flaws and varieties that occurred during the platemaking process. But apart from the 1b value, any variations in colour are due to gum corrosion or exposure to light rather than inconsistencies at the paper mill.

The Papal States had a complex system of postal charges, so most values in the set are found as

bisects, or smaller, to suit the multiplicity of rates.

The design is as simple as it gets; using bold type and printers ornament and the set has no defences against postal forgery. There were two reprints, but with their poor impressions pulled from damaged plates, they are easily distinguished from the originals. The main problem with these stamps is forged cancellations.

Papal States, January 1852

As well as heading the Catholic Church, the popes of this period ruled some 41,150 sq km of territory, comprising Romagna, Marche, Umbria and Lazio. So a change in pontiff could have repercussions far beyond the church doors.

Pope Pius IX was elected in 1846 by reforming elements in the conclave of cardinals and his pontificate aroused widespread hopes for change.

He began by declaring an amnesty for political prisoners, relaxing censorship and reforming the judiciary and educational systems. However, he was forced into exile in 1848 during the short-lived Roman Republic and only re-instated with French support.

The introduction of postage stamps had been under discussion since 1847, but in 1852 it went ahead, with three basic designs to be printed by letterpress. All but the top two values were in black on different coloured papers. Each design featured the papal arms: the crossed keys and papal crown and the three basic types would be used up until 1870.

The first series of stamps ran from 1852 to 1867. It was denominated in Bajocchi and Scudi (1 sc = 100b) and a basic set has eleven values. However, this was not enough for all the postal rates in force at the time and almost all values are found cut into halves, thirds and quarters. There is considerable variation in the colours and thicknesses of paper. The inks also vary from black to grey. And there is every conceivable kind of flaw and variety from broken frames to missing letters and double prints.

This is another Italian State which has generated a mass of books, articles and study papers and could easily become a lifetime's obsession.

As the Second War of Independence proceeded, the Papal forces proved no match for the Sardinians and the Pope's temporal power was reduced to the area around Rome. Pius IX dubbed himself the 'Prisoner of the Vatican' and the Papacy maintained its independence only with French protection.

In 1867, the currency changed to Cents and Lire to match the rest of Italy and new stereos were made accordingly; this set had a short life, being replaced by perforated stamps in 1868. However, in 1870, defeat in the Franco-Prussian War brought an end to French support and on 20 September 1870, Italian troops entered Rome. Today, you'll find a Via XX Settembre in almost every town and village across Italy.

The question of the Papacy and its temporal power was not entirely resolved until 1929, when the Lateran Treaty established the Vatican City as a separate state, and the crossed keys appeared on another set of stamps.







Above, from left: Neapolitan Provinces. The 1/2t green is found in a similar range of shades to the 5c of Sardinia; a fine four-margin copy of the scarce 1g black. This colour is not used for the stamps of Sardinia. (photographs courtesy of Tony Clayton)

Left: Papal States. Stamps perforated 13 were in use from 1868 to 1870.This is the 10c on vermilion (photograph courtesy of Tony Clayton)

Robert Siegel Auction

Printing for Italy

Italy's first stamps appeared from April 1862 and were produced by Matraire in the country's new capital, Turin. They are the same as the fourth Sardinian printing, except that the stamps are now perforated 11.5 x 12. All other perforations are forgeries, as are any perforated copies of the 5c green and the 3l bronze, which are not part of the official set of four. The first stamp to bear the name Italy followed in 1863, a simple, almost provisional design, printed by lithography and issued imperforate.

The new Italian post office now had the task of unifying postal rates and practices across the whole country and they made a start with the Postal Act of 1862, which came into force on 1 January, 1863. One of its provisions was that all postage rates, including registration, had to be paid in advance by postage stamps; this would cause a massive increase in demand. Matraire's contract was coming to an end and so the new country looked overseas for stamp production while it set up its own state printing works. The full set for the new country was produced by De La Rue.

Many thanks to the Italy & Colonies Study Circle (ICSC), Corinphila and Robert Siegel Auctions, Tony Clayton and the website antichi stati italiani, for information and images used in this article.

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Lithuanian Occupation of Klaipeda

Michael Adkins continues his guide to the stamps of Memel, this month focussing on the Lithuanian occupation period, prior to being fully incorporated into the Republic of Lithuania

Memel (Klaipeda), was an important trade region on the Baltic sea lying on the eastern boundaries of Prussia. The territory was included in the German Empire at its formation in 1871 and continues to this day to be an important shipping port on the Baltic and the gateway to the Curonian Lagoon. After the defeat of the Germans in the First World War, Memel was separated from Germany and assigned as the Territoire de Memel under administration of the Conference of Ambassador (later becoming part of the League of Nations in 1925).

Last month we covered the French administration of the Territoire de Memel which lasted from February 1920 until January 1923. This month, we will discuss the Lithuanian occupation period, prior to being fully incorporated into the Republic of Lithuania.

After the war, the Baltic nations, including Lithuania, were granted independence from Russia. The newly formed Republic desired Memel (or Klaipeda in Lithuanian), as it was the only viable port in on the Baltic the region. Not happy that the Conference of Ambassador was leaning towards turning Memel into a Free City (like Danzig), Lithuania began sending activists into the towns and villages of the region to stir up support for Lithuanian rule. While the city of Memel was primarily German, the countryside had a significant Lithuanian population. Finally, just prior to an important meeting to decide the future of Memel, Lithuanian militia dressed as civilians, entered Memel and instigated the Klaipeda Revolt on 10 January, 1923.

While the allied nations made several threats and demands for withdrawal, they were unwilling to back them militarily, as they feared that the USSR would support Lithuanians, threatening another war.

Finally, realising that the occupation was a fait accompli, the Conference of Ambassadors recognised the Lithuanian occupation on 16 February, 1923. The two parties agreed that Memel (renamed Klaipeda by the Lithuanians), could become an autonomous region within Lithuania. Lithuania was required to allow freedom of transit between the Curonian Lagoon and the Baltic, recognise Lithuanian and German as official languages, and allow freedom of religion as Lithuania was Catholic and the German population was Lutheran.

On 8 May, 1924, the Conference and Lithuania codified the agreement in the Klaipeda Convention, and on 25 August, 1925, the agreement took full effect when it was finally agreed by the League of Nations.

During the occupation period, Lithuania issued about 120 different stamps all in the span of less than a year (February to December 1923). The first stamps were issued in early February, 1923. Lithuania took un-issued official stamps and overprinted them 'Klaipeda (Memel)' and surcharged them in German currency.

Beginning on 28 February, 1923 (shortly after occupation was recognised by the Conference of Ambassadors) Lithuania issued its first printed stamps for Klaipeda. The first set was of a design similar to the Lithuanian official stamps featuring the Vytis, the national symbol of Lithuania. On 12 April, 1923, Lithuanians released an additional thirteen issue set of stamps with three different designs: a ship, an anchor and a lighthouse. All of these stamps were issued in Marks, the currency of Germany.

Beginning on 16 April, 1923, Lithuania changed the official monetary units in Klaipeda to Lithuanian litas (100 centu = 1 litas). Stamps began to be surcharged appropriately. Up until the end of 1923, postal authorities continued to surcharge Klaipeda stamps into Lithuanian currency. There were more than sixty different stamps issued, however the different plate varieties, overprint types, and errors run into the hundreds. All Klaipeda stamps were valid for use until 8 August, 1925.

Collecting Klaipeda stamps from this period can be enjoyable and interesting. There is a whole gamut of different things to collect. While one could fairly easily collect all of the major stamps issued, there are hundreds of minor variations and errors which can be found. Additionally, many of the issues have been forged, and are easily identifiable with a little help; they can add interest to any collection. On top of that, with 68 different post offices in the Klaipeda region, collecting postmarks can also be a satisfying venture. But beware, cancelled forgeries are more common than genuine postmarks, and it is always recommended that particularly valuable cancellations should be expertised.



From left: issued 7 February, 1923. There were two different issues of the first Provisionals, this is the Memel printing • Issued 28 February, 1923, the first issues of Klaipeda featured the same design as the provisionals • Issued 9 April, 1923, this is one of three designs from a thirteen-issue set. The lighthouse symbolises the importance of the port of Klaipeda. Forgeries of the 1930s can be identified by checking the perforations • Issued 23 April, 1923, the earlier Lithuanian currency surcharges used thin numbers, while the later issues were printed with thick numbers

Fact file



Government: Occupation by Lithuania

Prior Regime: French Administration of Memel

Key Dates:

June 1919 – Treaty of Versailles

February 1920 – France assumed administration of Memel

10-15 January, 1923 – Klaipeda Revolt

19 January, 1923 – Lithuanian troops take control of Memel

8 May, 1924 – Klaipeda Convention

25 August, 1925 – Klaipeda Convention ratified by the League of Nations

Following Regime: Republic of Lithuania

First Stamp Issued: 5 February, 1923

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Vaster than has been



This month hundreds of Christmas stamps will be issued by countries around the world, giving collectors a huge selection of jolly, seasonal issues to choose from but, as Chris West reveals, philately's first forays into festive stamps were a little more low-key

We like to think of Christmas stamps as relatively recent – the first UK ones were issued in 1966, with designs by two children (one of whom, Tasveer Shemza, was a judge when children were asked to design our 2013 Christmas stamps). However the tradition goes back to the 19th century. The first Christmas stamp ever issued went on sale on 7 December, 1898, in Canada.

It is hardly overflowing with Christmas spirit. This is partly a reflection of the age: Imperial pride seemed more important than the private joys of Christmas celebration. But this is also because the 'Xmas' element was an afterthought. The stamp was issued to celebrate the initiation of a new, lower Empire-wide 'penny post' (previously, letters from Canada to the UK or the Cape had cost 5 cents). The introduction of this rate was scheduled for 25 December.

There is an apocryphal story that 'Xmas' only appeared because of a conversation between William Mulock, Canada's Postmaster General, and Queen Victoria. Mulock suggested the stamp be issued on 9 November, 'to honour the prince' (this date was the Prince of Wales' birthday). The Queen, who had long ago fallen out with her extravagant son, replied testily, 'What Prince?', to which Mulock quickly replied, 'Why, Ma'am, the Prince of Peace'.

The quote on the stamp comes from 'Song of Empire', a poem written for Victoria's 1897 Diamond Jubilee by Welsh poet Sir Lewis Morris. Morris' work is now largely forgotten, except, perhaps, by philatelists, but in his heyday he was a substantial figure. He was in line for the post of Poet Laureate on the death of his friend Tennyson, but lost to Alfred Austin, who is often cited as the worst laureate ever. Part of the reason for this defeat was Morris' long-running affair with his housekeeper. Being a friend of Oscar Wilde didn't help. But the main cause was probably politics. Morris' views seem odd to modern sensibilities. He was a radical who favoured Welsh home rule and wrote a special ode for the Trades Union Congress in Wales in 1901. Yet he was also a fervent supporter of Empire. Modern historians are apt to forget how Empire was a populist project in the Victorian era, not just an elite one.



Canada's Christmas stamp of 1898 is more concerned with the reaches of the British Empire than any good will to all men

Than has ever been?

The claim on the stamp is debatable. Arguably Genghis Khan had a larger Empire, stretching right across 13th-century Asia. The biggest Empire ever, in terms of percentage of world population, was that of Cyrus the Great and his descendants between 550 and 350 BC (this empire was noted for the efficiency of its postal system). But the British Empire was certainly the largest the world had seen for several centuries. It had grown rapidly in the Victorian era thanks to conquests in Africa, and would reach its maximum size after the First World War, when various parts of the former German Empire were ceded to Britain – ironically, the moment Britain could least afford it, as we were nearly bankrupted by the conflict. However, in 1898, such problems lay in the future. This stamp brims with unshakeable confidence: in another poem, Morris talked about 'The Empire of a thousand years'.

There is ongoing debate about who was next to issue a Christmas stamp. Denmark produced a charity 'seal' in 1904, which you put on an envelope alongside a proper postal stamp. Austria produced two stamps featuring wreaths in December 1937, clearly intended for the Christmas post but not formally announced as such. Oddly, the honour may well go to Hungary, who issued three special stamps with religious themes in December 1943 – at a time when that nation was allied to Hitler.

Chris West is author of *First Class: A History of Britain in 36 Postage Stamps* published by Random House (£12.99)



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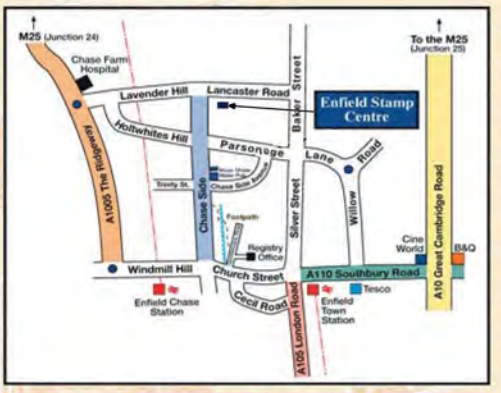
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I can remember the day I found my Father's stamp collection in the bottom drawer of the bureau in the dining room more than 45 years ago. Aged 11, I was excited travelling the world through his stamps. In those days every school had a stamp club and mine was no exception. I took the collection to school and joined the stamp club. When Mr. Armitage (the Chemistry Teacher who ran the club) asked what stamps we collected I said "Wurttemberg" – much to everybody's surprise. In fact they were from Austria and the page was misclassified. They were those imperforate 1920's Austrian Newspaper stamps which fascinated me and as everybody now knows are hardly worth anything … but probably they helped me get started in stamps.

Over following years I found little help in understanding stamps, so much had to be learned the hard-way, which is why my company UPA publishes what I dare to hope are useful articles about collecting and buying and selling stamps. It is my hope that these prove valuable to you and that we may serve you if you decide to contact us …

There are several different types of stamp businesses

In fact no two stamp dealers are alike. What a truism that is. Once in Amsterdam I made the mistake of admitting to the owner of the stamp shop I was visiting that I was a dealer. In almost perfect English **"We Don't sell to Dealers"** and he turned his back. So did I - as I left his shop. But over the years I discovered that the only way to succeed in stamps was to create a business of stamp selling systems and join them all together. This is what allows us to handle stamps from literally every single country in the world. Recently in coming articles which I shall call ***'Case Studies'*** the strength of this business model has become apparent.

"We Don't sell to Dealers" and he turned his back.

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Looking forward to hearing from you.
Thank you for reading

Andrew McGavin, Managing Director UPA



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Turtles and crocodiles



In the first in a new series highlighting the stamps and postal history of former British colonies, Ed Fletcher provides a brief introduction to the Cayman Islands, describing how the island came under British rule and what the colonial period left for collectors

In 1503 a fourth expedition by Christopher Columbus, still searching for his route to the Indies, took Spanish ships close to three small Caribbean islands with foreshores overrun by turtles. Columbus named the islands Las Tortugas (The Turtles); but they later took the name of the creatures that preyed on the turtles – Las Caymanas (The Sea Crocodiles).

The Treaty of Madrid (1670) surrendered the Cayman Islands to the British, who made the islands a dependency of Jamaica, 200 miles to the south-west. Jamaica shipped over a party of settlers; but the newcomers found pirates firmly in control of the two smaller islands, Little Cayman and Cayman Brac (Brac means sea cliffs); so British presence was initially confined to Grand Cayman (175 square miles in area). During the 18th century the population grew painfully slowly and with scarcely any need for postal services. If a letter had to reach Britain it was carried in a local boat to an agent in Jamaica who took his fee and put it aboard the next ocean-going ship.

The population topped 1,000 by 1804 (half European; half slave) and the settlement at Georgetown (named after George III) had developed a small export trade for its salt-water resistant ropes made from local palm leaves; and for live turtles as fresh meat. With the need for improved overseas postal services growing, the islanders called, in the 1840s and 1850s, for the Royal Mail Company's ships plying between Kingston in Jamaica and Belize in British Honduras to pick up mail and passengers at Georgetown. Their petitions failed on the grounds that reefs around Grand Cayman posed serious dangers. Demands for mail services grew yet more strident when Jamaica first used British stamps in 1859, and its own stamps after 1860.

Eventually, in 1889, Jamaica opened a branch post office at Georgetown; in 1898, a second post office opened at Stake Bay, Cayman Brac; but both offices handled mail for overseas destinations only. Islanders remained without inter-island mail services between the Caymans for a further ten years. Written communications between Georgetown and the outlying areas of Grand Cayman remained underdeveloped at that time.

Life began to change postally in 1900 when the first stamps of the Caymans made their appearance: Queen Victoria Key Plate designs with ½d and 1d values. They proved highly popular as keepsakes around the islands, but scarcely more than a year later Edward VII's portrait replaced his mother's when the Queen died. It was reported in the British Press at the time that the Cayman Islands was the first of the Crown Colonies to use the stamps of the new monarch.



Above, from left: Jamaica issues used on a cover posted in the Cayman Islands. This April 1893 cover has two Jamaica ½d yellow-green stamps of 1889-94 cancelled by a Type Z1 Grand Cayman violet cancellation. Addressed to Jamaica, the reverse has Kingston and Lucea c.d.s's. Despite some slight staining, the cover sold for £6,000 in a 2011 Grosvenor Auction sale; Cayman Islands first issues; ½d and 1d singles and blocks of four used on a 1901 cover registered to England via Jamaica. Sold for £380 in a 2013 Grosvenor Auction

Above left: Cayman Islands stamp from 1989 showing George Gauld's 1773 map of the region

Right: SG 27 (2), 29 (2) and 33 (1). Sold for £160 in a 2013 Grosvenor Auction

Before 1901 the postal rate for mail between the Cayman Islands and Jamaica was 1d for letters and ½d for postcards; so there was no domestic demand for stamps over 2½d. A small supply of 4d stamps was, however, sent from Jamaica to Georgetown for use on letters destined for overseas; 4d per half-ounce being the foreign rate. With 4d stamps available at the two post offices, islanders no longer had to make private arrangements with schooner captains who would carry letters to Tampa, Montego Bay or Cuba as the first stage for an overseas letter. Shortages of stamps occurred in 1907, and overprints were produced in both Kingston and handstamps at Georgetown. Additional shortages in 1908 resulted in the use of manuscript frankings for short periods in May and October of that year.

In his fascinating paper on Cayman Islands postal history in the *Bulletin of Postal History* (1920), Eric Glasgow tells of a former owner of the Queen's Highcliffe Hotel, Margate who undertook annual yachting expeditions to the Caymans to buy turtles. This adventurer also had philately in his veins; and in 1907 caused a shortage of the ½d and 1d Edward VII adhesives by exhausting all available stocks on low-rate mailings. He then cajoled Cayman Islands Post Mistress, Gwendolyn A Parsons, to use redundant stocks of the 5s value to produce ½d and 1d provisionals. During the same year, or in 1908, she also applied surcharges to 1d and 4d values to overcome temporary shortages of ½d, 1d and 2½d values. Her initials (G.A.P.) appear on handstruck provisionals. Her successor – for whom Ms Parsons later worked as Assistant Post Mistress – was William Graham McCausland, who also applied his manuscript endorsements to provisionals.

Prospering postal service

With its own stamps from which to generate income, Cayman's postal service began to prosper, earning £268 pounds (Jamaican) in 1900, rising to £585 just a year later. In February, 1908 the Postmaster made a number of recommendations to reduce the postage rate from 1d to ¼d for postcards and for every two-ounces of printed matter. Improvements in the mail service between Georgetown and rural post offices on Grand Cayman were soon underway with horse-drawn wagons and horseback postmen who carried supplies of stamps. It was during this period that the first private letterboxes were installed in the General Post Office at Georgetown. By 1913 revenue from postal services stood at £2,750, more than fifty percent of the colony's total fiscal income. Underpayment when applying stamps was never a major problem, so Postage Due demands were levied by simply cancelling an ordinary postage stamp with a hand-stamped 'T'. At Georgetown black ink was used; at Cayman Brac violet ink served the same purpose. An interesting example is seen in the illustrations of Grosvenor Auctions lots accompanying this feature.

Although the First World War took place more than 4,000 miles from the Cayman Islands, their support for Britain in those dark days and the depressed aftermath was never in doubt. They eagerly bought the War Stamps of the period; and they were more than cheered by news that an American-owned canning factory recently opened near Georgetown had plans to pack turtle meat into one-pound cans and ship it to Britain when the war ended.

Cayman culture

In 1932, for the first time, elements of the islands' culture featured in a stamp design. This was Cayman's first commemorative, issued to honour the 100th anniversary of the Assembly of Justices and Vestry, now the Legislative Assembly of the Cayman Islands. The stamp carried the busts of William IV, who had been king in 1832; and of George V, who ruled in 1932. Between the monarchs the design depicted the palm trees from which the island's famous ropes were made; and two types of Cayman turtles for which Cayman was even more renowned.

In 1935 the Cayman Islands issued a new set of stamps to mark George V's Jubilee; a set still often praised as one of the most beautiful of any stamp-issuing country; combining eye-appeal with simple dignity of design. Emphasising Caymanian heritage, stamps in the set featured maps of the three islands; a cat boat, booby birds, queen conches and hawksbill turtles. The monarch's portrait is framed by palm thatch ropes.



From top:

A 1932 Centenary stamp (2s) used on a 1934 registered cover to England

War Tax surcharges on Cayman Islands ½d and 2½d pairs used on a plain registered first day cover to Scotland, with manuscript 'G Cayman/R 4755' registration in blue crayon. This rare example sold for £450 in a recent Grosvenor Auctions sale

1935 Silver Jubilee issues; ½d. to 1s; on registered cover from Georgetown to Scotland (a day before official date of issue)

It was in that year that Cayman received its first shipment of airmail carried via Jamaica by Pan American Airways. The islands had caught the attention of the burgeoning international tourist industry which, together with banking and its tax haven status, would deliver the bright future. Today even the island's turtles benefit from protected status and breeding programmes.

Cover illustrations courtesy of Grosvenor Auctions. Visit the Grosvenor website at: www.grosvenorauctions.com

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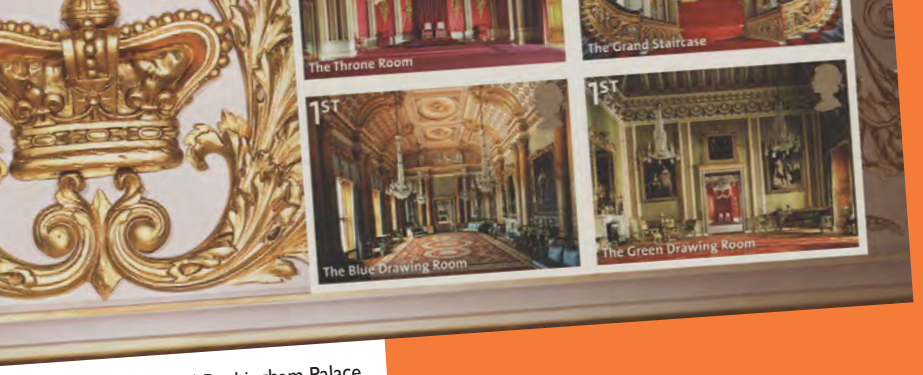
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Imperial Airways aircraft refuelling (image Library of Congress)

India to London air mail 1929

In his ongoing series deciphering postal history items, Dane Garrod examines and explains the postal markings on a 1929 cover sent during the first months of a new air mail service

The Royal Air Force was keen to be relieved of its responsibility in running a desert mail service between Cairo and Karachi, and accordingly a five year agreement was reached in 1925 with the Air Ministry whereby Imperial Airways would operate a regular passenger, freight and air mail service. For this, Imperial Airways received a subsidy of £500,000 annually for five years. By 1929, they had the means and the aircraft to extend this into a weekly service between Croydon in the UK, and Karachi in India, a service that became known as the 'Karachi route'.

The machines used for these flights were De Havilland D.H.66 Hercules aircraft, with a maximum speed of 128 mph, the first flight being on Saturday 30 March, 1929. At last, India was in direct regular weekly air contact with the United Kingdom for the first time. Departure from Croydon was on a Saturday, and the corresponding weekly flight in the reverse direction from Karachi was on Sundays.

The cover illustrated was sent on the return journey from Karachi to Croydon, the aerodrome for London at that time. First postmarked over a block of four King George V 2 anna postage stamps on Wednesday 7 August, 1929, in Simla, it travelled by rail to Karachi to be delivered to the aerodrome to take the next available flight. The handstamp on the reverse shows 'KARACHI/10 AUG.29', the cover being held overnight to go on the Imperial Airways flight on the following day, Sunday, on flight number IW19 – the nineteenth westward flight on this Karachi route by the airline. The sender also added the words 'KARACHI/CROYDON' together with the blue 'AIR MAIL' label, so exactly signifying which route the letter was to travel. Before despatch, the post office in Karachi had added the double circle 'BY AIR' handstamp.

Once a successful landing had been made at Croydon – and not all flights at this time were without mechanical delays, or even worse, accident – the mail bag with our cover inside would have been taken to the nearby station for an onward rail journey northwards into London by Southern Railway. Sorted either en route, or more probably, in London, the cover would have been sent in a mailbag to Paddington rail station, and then in a Great Western Railway train to Great Malvern in Worcestershire, as required by the addressee name and address shown. The round arrival handstamp for Malvern is timed and dated just after midday on Monday 19 August, the Hercules aircraft having landed at Croydon, if on schedule, on the previous day. Travel had now taken twelve days.

However, the senior Mrs Townley was not at home at the splendidly named 'Elysium'. She'd taken train and boat to the Channel Islands for an August summer holiday. Apparently, her family thought she was at a hotel in St. Peter Port, in Jersey, and arrival of the cover in Jersey is shown by the round arrival handstamp timed and dated in the late evening of Wednesday 21 August. The cover and letter was at fourteen days travel, and one hopes there was no urgent message inside. Whatever the reason for the addressee having moved on, she was now at a hotel in Guernsey, the Jersey hotel having crossed out their name and added a new revised postal address. No postal evidence is shown by arrival in Guernsey, but there is no reason to believe it did not travel to the Homeland Hotel. It was certainly opened in a hurry and without much care, as shown by the use of a thumb rather than a knife or letter opener. Fortunately for postal historians, this envelope survived to tell a story of transmission and delay.





1 The cover was posted, and postmarked on 7 August, 1929, in Simla.

2 The sender also added the words 'KARACHI/CROYDON' together with the blue 'AIR MAIL' label, so exactly signifying which route the letter was to travel.

3 The letter travelled by rail to Karachi and a handstamp on the reverse shows 'KARACHI/10 AUG.29'.

4 Before despatch, the post office in Karachi had added the double circle 'BY AIR' handstamp.

5 The arrival handstamp for Malvern is timed and dated just after midday on 19 August.

6 Mrs Townley was not at home and the letter was re-addressed to Jersey. A round arrival handstamp timed and dated in the late evening of 21 August.

7 The Jersey hotel crossed out their name and added a new revised postal address in Guernsey.

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December 12th

NOTTINGHAM (MIDWEEK FAIR)
Nuthall Temple Centre, Nottingham Road, Nuthall NG16 1DP
December 9th

POWICK VILLAGE HALL
nr. Great Malvern WR2 4RT December 5th

STOCKPORT (MIDWEEK FAIR)
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A touch of glass

People have been moulding, blowing and crafting glass since the first century BC, writes Paula Hammond, and that means there are plenty of stamps on the theme too

The art of glassblowing, arguably, reached its zenith during the period of the Roman Empire which saw the production of some staggeringly beautiful glass vessels, crafted into complex shapes, with elaborate motifs picked out in high relief. In fact the standard of work was so good that glassblowers such as Aristeas, Ennion, Jason and Meges effectively became the ancient world's big 'brand names'.

Today, everyday glassware is mostly machine-made and glassblowing has been relegated to the fringes of the arts and crafts movement. However, the science of turning sand into glass, and the skill of turning glass into art, remains one of humankind's greatest achievements. And let's not forget that without glassblowers, early scientists would have had no bottles, retorts or vials, no lamps, or lightbulbs and no magnifiers.

Glassblowing therefore makes a great thematic, with lots of scope to build a really appealing and attractive collection.

Arts and crafts stamps are an especially good source of glassblowing imagery and while glass may have been born in Egypt, glassblowing remains a popular folk craft in Scandinavia. In Denmark, Holmegaard glassworks dates back to 1825 and still produces 'mouth-blown' glass. In Småland, Sweden, the 'Kingdom of Crystal' boasts fifteen traditional glassworks. So it is fitting that Scandinavia has produced some lovely glassblowing issues. Of particular note is a 1972 Swedish set of five stamps celebrating glassblowing, which were issued in booklets. The images were based on series of striking photos of glassblowing by Lennart Olson, beautifully engraved by Czeslaw Slania. A similar, though less technically brilliant, Glass Production series from Denmark (1976) featured four glassblowing images in a rustic, woodcut style. Staying up North, Finland's 1981 'Lasiteikkisuus' stamp marked the bicentenary of its glassblowing industry with a stylish stamp in which the silhouettes of four glassblowers were arranged inside the outline of a glass bottle.





Glass production dates back thousands of years and many nations have chosen to celebrate glassblowing in a historical context too. Italy's 1984 se-tenant issue harks back to the Venetian glass industry with images of a medieval glass mosaic and furnace, alongside a traditional glassblower; a label divides the pair. The USA's 1972 bicentennial stamp commemorates Colonial American Craftsmen with an image of a 18th-century glassblower. While Canada's striking 1999 series focusses on Traditional Trades, including bookbinding (1c), ironwork (2c), glassblowing (3c), oyster farming (4c), weaving (5c), quilting (9c), woodworking (10c) and leather working (25c).

Glassblowing also includes some wonderfully oddball stamps, which at first glance may seem superfluous to the theme. A great example is Guyana's 1995 series which shows various Disney characters engaged in a loosely linked selection of hobbies and professions.







G is for glassblowing

Why Collect?

- A popular folk craft with a rich history.
- Stamps issued by countries as far afield as Bosnia to USA.
- Flexible theme.
- Opportunities for diversification and specialisation.
- An attractive and appealing topic.

Notable Releases

- 1972 - Sweden glassblowing booklet.
- 1972 - USA 8-cent stamp featuring colonial American Craftsmen.
- 1976 - Denmark four-stamp Glass Production set.
- 1981 - Finland 'Lasiteikkisuus' bicentenary stamp.
- 1999 - Canada 3-cent stamp from the Traditional Trades series.

Expand the theme

Stained glass makes a lovely subset to the theme. The postal work of glass artists like Koloman Moser (who designed everything from the stained glass in Steinhof Chapel to postage stamps and currency) are especially interesting, if occasionally challenging, to track down.

Collecting Links

The Glassblower Website includes a short, sweet and well-researched list of glassblowing postal issues, including photos and descriptions. Visit the website at: www.glassblower.info/stamps

MAL 62 MALAYA A substantial collection of Malaya, Malaysia with Singapore. Contains several hundred unmounted mint and fine used stamps in blocks and singles. Noted: Perak, Selangor, Kedah, Sabah, Perlis, Trengganu, Pulau Pinang, Negri Sembilan, Kelantan, Sarawak, Melaka, Johor, Parhang; with strength in Singapore. Several hundred stamps .....Price £17

CO. 882 COLOMBIA An important collection of Colombian stamps dating back to older engraved issues. The collection contains several hundred Columbian stamps, including mint and used with elusive overprinted stamps noted. Several hundred different stamps of Columbia Price £24

R. 472 RYUKYU ISLANDS: Rarely offered for sale, this is a superb collection of the stamps of The Ryukyu Islands. Containing only superb unmounted mint stamps. Over 100 different Ryukyu Island Stamps .....Price £18.75

MI 349 MALDIVE ISLANDS: An impressive stamp collection of only unmounted mint blocks of Maldive Island stamps. The collection is rich in thematic commemoratives. Several hundred mint Maldive Islands Stamps ..... Price £16

BOB 2 WINSTON CHURCHILL One of the scarcest Churchill covers ever. The combination cover is a dual commemorative of 50th anniversary of Churchill's death in conjunction with the 75th Anniv. of the Battle of Britain. Depicting the iconic war poster with Churchill's quote: "*Never was so much owed by so many to so few.*" The cover bears the Royal Mail Churchill Commemorative stamps issue with Churchill Blenheim Palace Pmk. Dated 24/1/15 Anniv. Of Churchill's death. The cover was unusually reposted on 16/7/15 with Battle of Britain spitfire anniv. Pmk. on the Royal Mail Spitfire commemorative stamp issue. From a restricted limited edition of only 50 covers. ..... Price £21

SA337 SAUDI ARABIA A small but valuable collection of Saudi Arabian stamps, all different and in superb unmounted mint condition. Contains lots of elusive items, the catalogue value is in excess of £100.....Price £23.50

CH 739 CHURCHILL A fantastic thematic collection of Winston Churchill stamps; comprising of hundreds of mint and used Churchill stamps, including blocks, noted scarcer unmounted mint blocks of exile govt. Churchill stamps dating back to 1952 unlisted in Stanley Gibbons Catalogue (seldom seen). All aspects of the great man's life are portrayed in this collection. Hundreds of Winston Churchill stamps… Price £18

HK 145 HONG KONG A fine collection of used stamps of Hong Kong. Almost all the stamps pre date the handover to China. Including $ values and popular Chinese New Year Commemoratives. Totally unchecked for catalogue value, over 100 Hong Kong stamps .....Price £11.

CL5 CLEMENT ATTLEE A scarce political cover commemorating the 70th anniv. of Clement Attlee becoming prime minister. Attlee won a landslide election victory in 1945 bringing the Labour party into power. The scarce cover depicts Clement Attlee in his World War I army uniform. The cover bears the official Royal Mail Attlee commemorative stamp issue with London 26/7/15 postmark. Only 50 of this scarce political cover are known to exist.....Price £19.25

E.E. 543 EASTERN EUROPE Includes Russia, Roumania Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Poland. Several hundred different stamps ..... Price £13.25

SAM.1. POLAND - small general collection, include - Nazi Occupation Concentration Camp issue inscribed 'Judenpost' for Lodz Ghetto (Litzmanstdt) 10pf Green (unused). We cannot guarantee this item but remainder of the collection all seem OK Cheap Price £8.75

SJ120 MEDICAL Stamps with specialised lot of Anti-TB and Red Cross stamps. Also Anti-Malaria stamps Red Cross stamps back to the 1940s or earlier up to more recent. With nursing, doctors and all forms of medicine. A most interesting subject rarely offered for sale ideal for anyone with some medical knowledge to form a valuable collection ..... Price £7

G.114 A WORLDWIDE COVERS & FDC'S Fantastic Accumulation of Commercial & Philatelic covers & FDC's including special pmks, early to modern with Air Mails, Sea Mail, commemorative covers, noted designer signed. Local posts, Islands Post, an unsorted group of about 100 covers.....Price £21

G126E WORKS OF ART. The rarities of the world's most famous art galleries at your fingertips. A superb collection of famous paintings on stamps, over a thousand different not counting duplicates or miniature sheets .....Price £26

RS2a UNIFORMS. Mainly military. Hundreds different. ....Price £12

Let K2 GREAT BRITAIN. UNMOUNTED MINT COMMEMORATIVES & DEFINITIVES UNSORTED ACCUMULATION. Items noted include Traffic Light Gutter Pair Missing Phosphor Error coil strips. Well over 500 stamps, only unmounted mint .....Price £18

R45 MINIATURE SHEETS & Souvenir Sheets, various different GB (Exhibition sheets) FOREIGN, odd Brit. Commonwealth. Total of 50+ different (Mainly Foreign) Min sheets .....Price £8

NY146 ENTOMOLOGY: One of the most unusual thematic subjects we have ever seen, insects on stamps. Hundreds of them Price £7

SJ53a BARDSEY ISLAND. (Welsh Local Issue) A superb specialised group of Unmounted Mint (complete sets) Stamps from this small Welsh Island rarely get offered for sale ..... Price £7.00

NY124 THE THREE KINGS King George V, King ED. VII and King George VI. A collection of British Colonials. UNMOUNTED MINT STAMPS. In singles and blocks. Approximately 100+ stamps, low price to clear .....Price £12.00

EUR 33 EUROPA - A specialised European thematic Collection of Europa stamps, spanning from the 1950's to more modern stamps. Includes Italy, France, Germany, Iceland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Cyprus, Netherlands, G.B. Denmark, Portugal, Spain, Swiss, Finland, Greece, Sweden. Also scarcer local issues for Channel Islands and Isle of Man. Hundreds of all different Europa Stamps, mainly fine used, but mini noted .....Price £17

FR 229 FRANCE & COLS - A smashing collection of France with French Colonies & Ex Colonies. Mainly Commemorative stamps in singles and blocks. Some unmounted mint, but mostly fine used. A lovely collection with many engraved stamps; several hundreds, mostly differentPrice £21

BX 486 BOXING - A fine collection of Boxing Stamps Over 80 Stamps in blocks and singles, including champion boxers such as Muhammad Ali. Mainly fine to used, mint noted, with Great Britain Royal Mail 2012 Olympic Games Gold Medal Boxing Stamps.....Price £9.75

HP 19A IRAQ WAR COVER - Extremely rare War in Iraq commemorative cover for the fall of Tikrit. Only 150 of this cover, depicting Saddam Hussein, ever existed. We understand many were damaged and destroyed, it is likely on a few covers survived. The cover bears a GB QEII stamp, postmarked with circular London SHC 15 April 2003 Pmk. Together with Iraq stamp overprinted "In British Occupation" This stamp is tied to the cover with a rectangular "Liberation of Iraq 15-04-03 THE FALL OF TIKRIT". Cachet in purple. A very rare Iraq War Cover in superb condition.....Price £26

LU 328 LUNDY ISLAND - A superb collection of unmounted mint British local stamps of Lundy Island in blocks, large multiples and singles + miniature sheet. Starts off with King George VI period. "Lundy & Atlantic Coats Air Lines Ltd. "Following on to puffin stamps overprinted with 1950s & 1960s stamps on to more recent. With lots of "Puffin" stamps, definitives, commemoratives & Air Mail stamps. Hundreds of unmounted mint Lundy Stamps.....Price £27.50

B COM 434 ORNITHOLOGY - A fantastic thematic collection of British Commonwealth BIRDS stamps. Only Unmounted Mint in multiples and single stamps. Several Hundred Brit, Commonwealth Bird Stamps including High Value (£) pound & ($) Dollar stamps in blocks....Price £39

CR 781 CRICKET - A valuable specialised collection of cricket stamps & scarce cricket covers, including signed covers autographed by famous cricketers. Comprising of Unmounted Mint Great Britain and British Commonwealth Stamps in blocks of four or singles with several high value ($) Dollar values. Approx 18 cricket covers including scarce autographed covers & a quantity of Unm. Mint Cricket StampsPrice £25

PM 84 MARGARET THATCHER - The very scarce mourning cover for Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. One of the scarcest political covers. Only 50 ever in existence, mostly now in collectors hands and rarely offered for sale. With "Iron Lady" illustration and official Royal Mail 8th April 2013. Big Ben postmark price.....Price £13.25

PER 5 - PERSIA & IRAN - A fine collection of several hundred Persia & Iran stamps, includes mint and used dating back to early engraved "Shah" stamps to more modern issues. Several Hundred different stamps, a good collection to build upon .....Price £14

C545 - WORLD COLLECTION - A great starter lot, with mint & used stamps also noted: miniature sheets, phq cards and several fdc's. Several hundred different world wide stamps plus other items .....Low price to clear ..... Price £9.75

GB.51 - GREAT BRITAIN SCARCE FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN COMMEM. Cover. Bearing the Abram Games stamp designer official Royal Mail Commem. Stamp cancelled with iconic Festival of Britain 25/3/14 Postmark. The cover also bears the complete King George VI 1951 Festival stamps with black cachet "G.PO. 1951 Festival of Britain Official Stamp Issue" The edition was limited to only 100 of these important covers .....Price £11.25

MC.334 - MUSIC - An awesome & valuable collection of music stamps begins with an orchestra of musical instrument stamps. The specialist classical section includes: Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, Tchaikovsky, Verdi, Bartok. Also jazz and popmusic stamps, with Louis Armstrong, Frank Sinatra, Oasis, Marlene Dietrich. With G.B. Royal Mail stamps of Freddy Mercury, The Beatles and Pink Floyd. A multiple of other issues for Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, Michael Jackson, Kylie Minogue, Elvis Presley and many more> Hundreds of stamps - mint and used with several miniature sheets. The best Music collection we have ever seen.....Price £29.25

J18 GREAT BRITAIN SCARCE WORLD WAR L COVER - A scarce commemorative cover for the Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the accepted incident that initiated World War I. The cover bears GB Royal Mail, British Legion commem issue with official Royal Mail postmark inscribed: "Outbreak of World War I - 1914 - 1918 Westminster Abbey dated 1/1/2014" Additionally the cover also bears Austro Hungarian military stamp with blue cachet "Bosnien Herzegowina Franz Ferdinand 1914 - 2014 Sarajevo" The Scarce cover was a severely restricted issue of only 75 covers and hard to locate.....Price £15

SW. 86 SWITZERLAND - A great starter collection to build upon of fine used Swiss mainly Commemorative stamps. 100 + All different.....Price £7

UN. 872 UNITED NATIONS - A lovely collection of only unmounted mint stamps, many in sets. Contains several plate number blocks as well as single stamps. Approx. 120 Mint United Nations stamps plus Miniature Sheets .....Price £9.80

FA16 - FALKLAND ISLANDS Scarce Referendum Cover - A rare and unusual cover for the Falkland Islands Referendum. The illustrated Falklands flag cover is inscribed 11/3/2013 Falkland islanders vote on Self Datermination. The cover bears a British Q.E.2. stamp with double penguin postmark dates 11/3/2013 Shetland P.O. It also has a Falkland Is. referendum stamp and Argentine War "Malvinas" ovpt stamp, both tied to the cover with Green Cachet "Falklands Referendum NO to Malvinas. 99.8% vote in favour of remaining with U.K. 11/3/2013" only 50 of rare covers are known to exist .....Price £18.50

GB 93 CONCORDE - An essay for the 1959 G.P.O Concorde stamp. A submitted design for the 4d demoniation in blue unwatermarked, imperforate with large margin - unmounted mint essay ex-exhibition sheet ..... Price £12

AF 21 AFRICA - A massive collection of Africa including mint and used stamps and Miniature Sheets. Countries noted include: Tunisia, Mozambique Company, Ghana including overprints on Gold Coast. Tanzania, Belgium Congo, South Africa, Rwanda, Cameroun, S.W. Africa, Lesotho, French Somali coast, Sudan, Sierra Leone - plus many others. A glorious collection of over 500 stamps, mostly all different singles with some unmounted mint blocks .....Price £29

BW 347 BRITISH WEST INDIES - An excellent collection of mainly unmounted mint British West Indies Stamps. Including: St Christopher Nevis & Anguilla, Antigua, Grenada, St Vincent, Cayman Islands, St Lucia & others. Also includes PHQ cards and F.D.C's, including first day cover signed by stamp designer and also scarce proof stamps and progressive proof stamps ..... Price £22

BH 44 BHUTAN - The collection from the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan comprises solely of unmounted mint stamps with blocks and singles and miniature sheets. A glorious lot of well over 100 unmounted mint stamps .....Price £11.50

GS 9L GRAF SPEE - The very scarce WWII Commemorative Cover for the 75th Anniv. of the scuttling of the pocket battle ship Graf Spee. Captain Hans Langsdorff scuttled the ship in full view of 20,000 onlookers before he shot and killed himself. The cover bears two submarine stamps with B.F.P.O. Battle of the River Plate pmk. dated 13 Dec. 14., and also the scarce Royal Crown and Lion pmk. Dated 17 Dec 2014 on the Anniv. date. It is understood that only 60 of this scarce cover exists ..... Price £18.50

B. 832 BRITISH AFRICA - A superb collection of only unmounted mint stamps from British Africa. Countries noted include: South Africa, Zambia, Ghana, Bechuanaland, Transkei, South West Africa, Zimbabwe, Gambia, Rhodesia, Lesotho, Tanzania & Swaziland with blocks and singles, hundreds of unmounted mint stamps .....Price £17.25

POL. 14 MARGARET THATCHER - One of the scarcest political covers ever. Issued to commemorate the 40th Anniv. of Margaret Thatcher becoming Leader of the Conservative Party in 1975. The first woman to lead a British Political party. The important cover bears British Margaret Thatcher stamps with (Royal Mail) "Iron Lady" Grantham Prime Minister pmk. Dated 14/10/2014 as well as the scarce Big Ben Anniv. postmark dated 11/2/2015. This cover which is mostly in collectors hands is rarely offered for sale ..... Price £23

RA. 8 DESERT RATS WAR COVER - A Sought after British Cover issued for the 70th Anniv. of the Desert Rats Battle for Migliano on 1/12/1944. The cover depicts Migliano and the iconic Desert Rat Emblem, it bears the British Spitfire Commemorative with scarce B.F.P.O 3181 Desert Rats 7th Armoured Brigade Postmark. On the Anniv. Date 1/12/14. Most of this scarce cover are now in specialist collections..... Recommended at our Price of £12.50

HRH. R3 KING RICHARD III - An important historic cover issued for the reburial of Richard III "The Last Plantagenet King of England". The cover depicts King Richard who was buried at Leicester Cathedral 530 years after his death at the battle of Bosworth Field. Only 60 of this scarce covers are in existence. The historic cover bears the British Royal Lion stamp postmarked with the official Royal Mail illustrated "Rest in Peace" Leicester Cathedral Pmk.. on 26/3/2015. Few available ..... Price £16

SC. 94 SPANISH COLONIES AND SPAIN - A super collection of Spain with strength in Spanish Colonies mint and used in singles and blocks, including scarce unmounted mint blocks dating back to 1899. Noted, postal workers charity issues and Spanish Civil War. 120+ stamps ..... Price £15

SH. 73 SHETLAND ISLANDS - Impressive cover for "Up-Helly-AA" The Viking Fire festival at Lerwic, when a Viking long boat is set on fire. The cover bears the Shetland Island Local Stamps depicting Vikings and a blazing Viking ship tied to the cover with Hildasay - Shetland Island cachet in blue, in combination with Royal Mail Stamp postmarked with the Celtic "Up-Helly-AA" Lerwic pmk ..... Price £13.25

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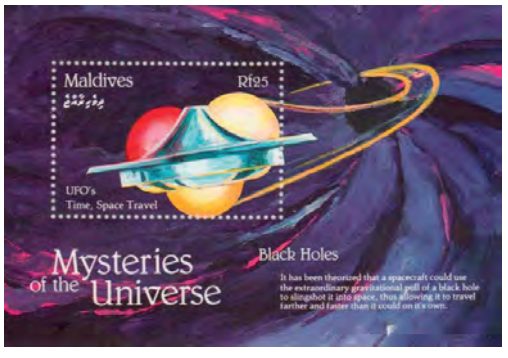
Inspired by the new Star Wars stamps? Why not enter the world of science fiction stamps? The theme offers huge scope for collecting stamps related to space, literature, film and inventions

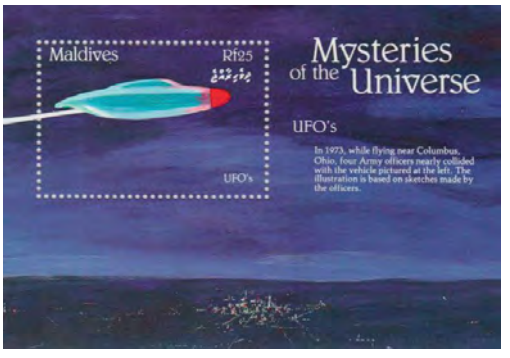
For as long as humans have existed, man has sought to look into the future, imagining events, objects and places that haven't yet been invented. This is the historic root of science fiction – the fictionalisation of events outside our own present-day experiences.

Science fiction is a wide and varied subject and as such, is the perfect topic for creating a thematic collection, with scope to collect stamps on topics as diverse as ancient myths, science fiction authors and movie monsters.

Although science fiction as we would understand it has its roots in the 19th century, early forms of the craft were practised thousands of years ago, with ancient Greek tales of six-headed monsters, ships that were eaten by sea creatures and 'super-humans' inhabiting Mount Olympus. Greece's 1935 airmail issue makes a fantastic start to a science fiction thematic, providing examples of what could be termed as the ancient roots of science fiction. The stamps show Helios (the sun god) riding a chariot through the air, and Daedalus and Icarus creating wings in an attempt to escape their captors, before Icarus tragically flew too close to the sun, melting his wings. On another two values we see the winged horse Pegasus, while the flight-themed designs also show twins Phrixus and Helle on a flying ram.

Jules Verne, author of adventures including *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, has been depicted on many stamps, including these examples form Hungary, Monaco and Panama





The Maldives suggested science fiction could be fact on these miniature sheets issued in 1992

Pushing the boundaries of technology

As man's discoveries extended, so too did the boundaries of science fiction; once much of the known world had been discovered, sci-fi writers looked instead to outer space and inventions such as rockets and spaceships. Jonathan Swift, the author of *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), although primarily producing a work of satire, took the fictional Gulliver to the levitating island of Laputa, a place whose inhabitants were obsessed with measurements. In 2010, An Post issued a superb Europa stamp featuring a scene from the book, showing Gulliver stepping into the minuscule town of Lilliput as the tiny townspeople look on in astonishment.

Despite the fact that some of the inventions depicted in these age-old science fiction-style tales actually came into being centuries later, these early writers were depicting fantasy worlds rather than imagining future science, which is what modern science fiction writers do. The term 'science fiction' was coined in 1851, by author William Wilson, in the book *A Little Earnest Book Upon A Great Old Subject*. The





A Russian stamp of 1967 imagines space craft; former Dr Who actor Matt Smith poses with his stamp from the 2013 set; one of the many first day covers issued to celebrate fifty years of *Dr Who*



France's 1955 Jules Verne issue on a commemorative card

term 'scientist' had been used for the first time a decade before; it is no coincidence that the two terms began to be developed just as the Western World was embarking upon the Industrial Revolution, when new inventions began to mechanise many of the processes that had been carried out by hand for thousands of years. This was literally the brink of a new society and the literature of the age reflected the huge change.

In 1818, Mary Shelley wrote the novel *Frankenstein*, which is one of the first sci-fi novels. Its publication marks a turning point in the history of science fiction, as it popularised the genre and also coincided with the start of the age of industrialisation with its accompanying growth in sci-fi. The tale of a scientist student who created a form of life, only to feel subsequent horror at what he had unleashed, would influence generations of future science fiction authors, as well as the creators of films and TV shows more than a century later.

The 1997 Europa theme of 'Tales and Legends' inspired the release of a Royal Mail Frankenstein stamp, which shows a comic-book style sketch of the monster. This was followed by a 2008 GB issue featuring a film poster for the Carry On Film *The Curse of Frankenstein*, which was a spoof on the book. The monster also appeared in the USA's 1997 'Classic Movie Monsters' issue, with a 32c stamp featuring Boris Karloff in the 1931 film *Frankenstein*.

Taking the genre into the twentieth century were an English and a French author – HG Wells and Jules Verne. Wells, who has been called 'the father of science fiction', wrote dozens of novels, including the 1898 bestseller *The War of the Worlds*. The novel featured in Royal Mail's 1995 Science Fiction set, which was devoted to Wells's novels, with four stamps featuring his literary works. In 2001, Israel issued a stamp featuring a portrait of the author, along with his time machine invention. Next year marks the 150th anniversary of Wells's birth, which could well mean he will feature on the 2016 stamp issuing programmes of several countries.

Another contender for the 'father of science fiction' title is Jules Vernes, the novelist and playwright whose science fiction works include *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. Romania issued a miniature sheet in 2005 to mark the centenary of Vernes's death, featuring six stamps which include a portrait of the author and five scenes from his novels. There are dozens of Verne-related stamps, many issued in the centenary year 2005 and among the finest are France's 1955 issue for the fiftieth anniversary of his death, featuring a Verne portrait and a fantasy ocean scene; Hungary's 'From the Earth to the Moon' two-stamp issue of 1969 and France's 2005 centenary six-stamp issue showing scenes from the author's novels reproduced in a



comic-book style.

Other sci-fi authors have also been well represented over the years, including Isaac Asimov and Bram Stoker. Sadly for sci-fi stamp collectors, the USA's plans to issue five stamps honouring their science fiction authors was suspended in 2013, prompting an online petition suggesting another sixty authors who should be featured on stamps, which has now been closed.

Sci-fi in popular culture

The period following the Second World War saw great advances in science and technology, with new inventions which would bring technology into ordinary homes; inventions which once existed only in the imaginations of sci-fi authors. Ordinary families used their newly purchased televisions to watch man land on the moon, and the excitement of the space race brought a new impetus to the field of science fiction, with popular programmes such as *The Quartermass Experiment* (1953), a space fiction show set in the near future.

The genre entered popular literature on a regular basis with the publication of *Amazing Stories* magazine in 1926. This was followed by the release of dozens of films including *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954), *1984* (1956) and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). George Orwell's chilling novel *1984* (written in 1948) also featured a future world – and was the subject of a Czech Republic stamp of 2013 showing a portrait of the author along with a huge depiction of Big Brother, portrayed as an all-seeing eye.

The Star Wars and Doctor Who franchises also helped to bring science fiction into mainstream culture and both of these have wide scope for collectors, offering enough philatelic material for a sub theme within your sci-fi collection. The USA's 2007 Star Wars issue was released to mark the thirtieth anniversary of *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope* and included artwork by Drew Struzan. Dr Who featured on Royal Mail's 2013 programme, with the release of Classic TV: 50 Years of *Doctor Who*, with eleven stamps showing various actors who have played the Doctor over the years. The accompanying miniature sheet showed the Doctor's enemies, including the familiar dalek who had also wheeled itself on to a British stamp in 1999 as part of Royal Mail's ambitious Millennium Series.

As with many more commercial subjects, smaller stamp-issuing countries have issued stamps recalling films and shows including Star Wars, *Star Trek* and *Alien*. Often the stamps are produced elsewhere with an agency acting on their behalf. These stamps, from places such as Micronesia, Djibouti or St Vincent and the Grenadines are often frowned upon by collectors, with doubts over the quality of design and production and the relevance to the country, but there are no rules in collecting, and many sci-fi collections will include these colourful issues.



British stamps have often celebrated science fiction, and a full set was dedicated to the work of HG Wells in 1995

Expanding your collection

With so many sub themes and topics, the possibilities for focusing your collection on a particular area of sci-fi are many. Because this is a wide and varied subject, selecting one or two topics that particularly interest you will give your collection focus to begin with, and you can always expand into other areas as you progress and your knowledge of the topic grows.

You could choose to focus on a particular field of science, such as flight, robotics or aliens. Or you might prefer to collect stamps relating to sci-fi literature, films and actors, popular culture in areas such as TV shows, space travel, or perhaps historic science fiction inventions that subsequently came into being.

For example, the Maldives' 1992 'Mysteries of the Universe' stamps focus on real-life sightings of UFOs and black holes, inspired by incidents such as the UFO reportedly encountered by four army officers in Ohio; the RF25 stamp features the drawing of the UFO made by one of the witnesses.







Below, from left: the Great British Film set of May 2014 included a scene from the groundbreaking sci-fi film *2001: A Space Odyssey*; The Genius of Gerry Anderson was celebrated in 2011; and while the Remarkable Lives set of March 2014 had no obvious links to the theme, it did feature a stamp showing Star Wars actor Sir Alec Guinness

Starting a Star Wars collection

Compared to many popular stamp collecting themes, the Star Wars universe is rather small, even if Royal Mail have recently added another eighteen designs to the pot, but there are enough stamps, first day covers, and coins to create a collection to impress fellow film fans, as our quick guide reveals

Before Royal Mail's ambitious set, the USA's 2007 stamps were top of the Star Wars 'wants' list. Issued to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the release of the original film, the fifteen 41-cent stamps were only available in a commemorative sheet, featuring artwork by long-time Star Wars poster artist Drew Struzan. The stars of each stamp were: Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker, Han Solo and Chewbacca, Princess Leia Organa and R2- D2, C-3PO, Yoda, Obi-Wan Kenobi, Emperor Palpatine, Stormtroopers, Boba Fett, Millennium Falcon, X-wing starfighter, Queen Padmé Amidala, Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker, and Darth Maul.

The back of the souvenir sheet included text describing the roles that each featured character or vehicle plays in the Star Wars saga, while just one special pictorial postmark was permitted, by Lucasfilm Ltd, to cancel stamps on first day covers, showing C3PO and R2D2.





New Zealand Mint have produced a long series of Star Wars coins on behalf of the island nation of Niue; coin collectors will also be interested in Royal Mail's recently released coin covers featuring the new stamps and a special Star Wars medal

The USA's 2007 Star Wars stamps, and of one the promotional R2D2-themed mail boxes

The USPS launched a major promotional campaign to promote the stamps. Post boxes were made to look like R2D2, post vans were adorned with film imagery, and Star Wars-themed Express Mail pre-paid envelopes were sold through the USPS website.

Meanwhile the Yoda stamp was voted the nation's favourite following a public poll and the diminutive Jedi Master's stamp was re-released in December 2007 as a single value. No longer on sale from the US Postal Service, the stamps can be obtained from many stamp dealers.

Could there be more Star Wars stamps from the US in the future? 'The Star Wars stamps were popular among Star Wars fans and well-received by collectors and stamp enthusiasts,' a spokesperson for the USPS told *Stamp & Coin Mart*. 'The issuance received extensive media coverage. Featuring popular subjects on postage stamps is healthy for the art of stamp collecting and bodes well for its future. While we have no current plans to issue new Star Wars stamps, the possibilities exist as we explore and bring popular subjects on stamps to the marketplace.'





Stamps from a galaxy far, far, away…

Collectors may also choose to include Star Wars stamps from less well known regions of planet Earth, such as St Vincent and the Grenadines, a 150 square-mile territory in the south Caribbean.

St Vincent's stamps were issued in 1995 and consisted of three $1 rectangular designs, presented on a sheet of nine values, and three $2 triangular designs, on a sheet of three stamps. The stamps had a silver foil effect and depicted Darth Vader, Yoda, and a stormtrooper. A year later another set was issued by the country, with drawings showing scenes from the original trilogy.

The African nation of Togolese Republic also paid homage to the first three films, with a miniature sheet featuring a single stamp. The 1997 sheet features a collage of characters, but does not reach the quality of artwork Star Wars fans will be used to.

These are the coins you're looking for…

Go into a shop in the Polynesian island of Niue and you won't be able to use your 'Galactic Credits' but the staff will have to accept your Star Wars coins, as produced on behalf of the country by the New Zealand Mint. The first set of legal tender coins, with a portrait of our real Queen on the obverse, showed characters including Han, Luke and Leia on the reverse, and a new 'Star Wars Classic' set features an engraving of Darth Vader flanked by two stormtroopers. Meanwhile, a $2 piece celebrates the release of Star Wars: The Force Awakens showing a colour image of new character Kylo Ren.

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Santa on stamps

Give your collection a festive twist with our guide to collecting stamps on the history, traditions and even the modes of travel of the big man himself, Santa Claus

Since the dawn of time, humans have sought to bring some light and celebration to the world in the depths of winter. Events such as the Roman feast of Saturnalia, a forerunner of our modern-day Christmas, used music, dancing and feasting to brighten up the dark days and anticipate the warmer, lighter days ahead.

One of the most universal symbols of Christmas – recognised by Christians and non-Christians alike – is Santa Claus, or Father Christmas, the jolly red-suited, white-bearded character who brings joy to children around the world, dispensing gifts on either St Nicholas Day or at Christmas.

A Santa Claus stamp collection can span thousands of years of history, from the earliest legends of St Nicholas through to the emergence of Santa as a movie and TV star; covering the folklore and traditions of dozens of different countries. There is scope to explore the emergence of Santa as the world-famous figure he is today and to demonstrate through stamps how his appearance has changed over the centuries, as well as using stamps from different countries to show how Santa is represented in various cultures, and even his varied modes of transport.



Christine Sanders, president of the Christmas Philatelic Club, spoke to *Stamp & Coin Mart* about how Santa first made his way onto stamps: '. Stamps from the 1940s issued by Belgium and Austria show his coat of arms and celebrate St. Nicholas Day. France issued a stamp for St. Nicholas on 23 June, 1951 while Liechtenstein did so on 5 February, 1953.

'The first Christmas stamps with an actual image of Santa Claus were issued by Cuba on 15 December, 1954. The head of a bearded Santa with a garland of holly and poinsettia appeared on both a 2c and 4c stamp in red and green. Although the Royal Mail began its special Christmas issues in 1966, it did not feature a stamp with Santa Claus until 1981. The design on this stamp was drawn by a five-year-old girl as part of a competition organised by the BBC's *Blue Peter*. The United States Postal Service began its special Christmas issues in 1962, but did not have a Santa Claus stamp until 1972. Over the years, the appearance of Santa Claus on Christmas stamps worldwide has become much more prevalent.'

Early origins

Although different countries have their own versions of how Santa Claus came into being, most of the legends are based on a man named Nicholas who was born in 280AD in modern-day Turkey and became Bishop of Myra.



Top, from left: a USA cover from 1991 bearing the Santa Claus stamp of that year; Cuba's 1954 Christmas stamps were the first to depict Santa

Above: St Nicholas seen on a Brazilian miniature sheet featuring a se-tenant pair of stamps

Left: Britain's first Christmas stamps were issued in 1966, but it was only in 1981 that Santa first appeared on a GB stamp, following a *Blue*

Nicholas was made a saint because of his many acts of kindness, particularly towards children. Various tales tell of him dispensing money to poor children, with one famous legend relating how he threw bags of gold down the chimney of three girls who were about to be forced into prostitution because their father was too poor to afford a marriage dowry for each of them. The legend was beautifully illustrated on Brazil's 2014 St Nicholas two-stamp issue which featured a drawing of the saint in the garb of a bishop, along with three shoes filled with money, and the three poor girls. Back in 1951, France issued a stamp featuring a Jean-Charles Didier print which also depicted this legend.

As with all Christian saints, St Nicholas has his own feast day, which is celebrated on 6 December and this is a popular feast in mainland Europe, with families gathering for a meal and children receiving gifts from Santa Claus – the modern-day name which has developed out of the original 'St Nicholas'.

The legends relating to St Nicholas

persisted down the centuries, even during times when the celebration of Christmas was under threat (such as during the Cromwellian regime) and after the Reformation, when the veneration of saints was suppressed.

St Nicholas has featured on stamps around the world over the decades. Among the best examples are Guernsey's 2005 Christmas stamps, featuring a St Nicholas window in an Alderney church; a 2002 Ukraine stamp showing the saint visiting children, much as Santa does nowadays; another Ukraine issue, this time from 2006, which portrayed St Nicholas across two stamps; and Austria's beautiful 2013 St Nicholas stamp (part of the Sacred Art in Austria issue) which shows him as a splendidly bejewelled icon.



From left: Santa first appeared on USA stamps in 1972; an Austrian stamp from 2013 showing St Nicholas; Finland's 2010 value showing a rosy-cheeked Santa; the tradition of writing to Father Christmas is celebrated on this 201 stamp from Australia

Santa enters popular culture

The modern-day Santa who plays such a big part in our culture began to develop in the early nineteenth century, initially in the USA. New York professor Clement Clarke Moore penned a poem initially titled 'A Visit From St Nicholas' which was intended to be read only by friends and family. However, a friend sent the verse to a newspaper and it was popularised under the title 'Twas the Night Before Christmas', now the world-famous tale of Santa portrayed as a 'right jolly old elf', flying through the skies, crying out to his team of reindeers 'Now Dasher, Now Dancer, Now Comet and Vixen!.

Santa, with his 'cheeks like roses, nose like a cherry', in Clarke Moore's imagination, had a 'bundle of toys he had flung on his back' and flew down the chimney (evoking memories of the St Nicholas legend), leaving presents for the children of the house and then 'sprang to his sleigh', disappearing into the night. A 1972 USA stamp, inscribed 'Twas the Night Before Christmas' shows this jolly Santa, right down to the bundle of toys.

This friendly Santa, with his sleigh and reindeer, captured the imagination of adults and children across America and in 1863, a Santa that we would recognise today was sketched by cartoonist Thomas Nast, who used Clarke Moore's poem to conjure up a fat, jolly Santa for the popular publication Harper's Weekly.

Before long, similar Santa Claus figures could be seen in shopping malls across the land, and the iconic image made its way across the Atlantic. In the 1920s, American illustrators including Norman Rockwell and JC Leyendecker, created their own versions of Santa to help promote Christmas products, then in 1931, Coca Cola began an advertising campaign featuring Father Christmas which would last for three decades and cement his popularity permanently.



Canada's 2014 stamp set featured three values showing Santa Claus

Santa on the silver screen

Of course, it was only a matter of time before Santa made the leap from the printed page into the medium of film and TV. Queen Victoria was still on the throne when the first known Santa Claus-inspired film, Santa Claus Filling Stockings (1897) was released. Father Christmas went on to become the star of several silent movies, which showed him moving around the homes of children, dispensing gifts.

One of the best loved Santa movies, which is a fixture in festive film lists each year, is Miracle on 34th Street (1947) which sought to bring the magic of Christmas and a child's firm belief in Santa Claus to film audiences jaded by six years of war. Over the decades, other films featured the Father Christmas story with varying degrees of success, including *Santa Claus is Comin' to Town* (1970) *Santa Claus: The Movie* (1985) and *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (1993).

Several TV favourites have inspired GB stamps – perhaps the most memorable being Raymond Brigg's The Snowman (1982) which told the story of a boy being taken on a magical flight by a snowman, to visit Father Christmas at the North Pole. In 2004, the work of Snowman artist Raymond Brigg's was used for Royal Mail's Christmas issue, with drawings from his book and film *Father Christmas*. These six charming stamps take a look at Father Christmas journeying around the world to deliver presents, battling his way through the snow, perching on an icy roof and negotiating bad weather with a torch.

Just two years later, Santa made a comeback on the 2006 eponymous Christmas issue which featured a traditional-style drawing of him perched on a chimney pot with a sack of toys on his back. Fast forward six years and it was the turn of children's illustrator Axel Scheffer (famous for his drawings in The Gruffalo) to present his interpretation of Santa – with a colourful five-stamp issue which included Santa with a robin, as well as stamps featuring a snowman, reindeer, a cat and a mouse.

Legends around the world

Perhaps one of the reasons that the legend of St Nicholas has persisted for the best part of 2,000 years is that the kindly figure has been adopted by many different countries, each of which has made Santa Claus its own by giving him characteristics and traditions peculiar to their own culture and history.

Jersey Post's 2014 eight-stamp issue 'The Story of Father Christmas' beautifully sums up Santa's multi-national characteristics – he is shown dressed in the colours by which children of different countries would recognise him; with a green bishop's cloak as he was portrayed in bygone England, as well as in costumes of blue, yellow and brown. The stamps also portray carrying out some of the tasks for which he is recognised in different countries – making toys, distributing gifts and meeting children. And this figure of legend can be either a man or a woman; in Russia and Italy Santa is respectively an elderly woman seeking to make amends for sending the Three Wise Men in the wrong direction, and a gift-giving witch.

In Slovenia, children can look forward to three rounds of festive gift-giving – from St Nicholas (6 December), Christmas Man (25 December) and Grandfather Frost (31 December), whilst Dutch children leave out a shoe

to be filled with present by Sinterklaas, hoping that any naughtiness won't result in a pile of sticks being left out instead.

Santa sub themes

Santa's mode of travel also varies depending on where in the world he is – making a great sub theme for a Santa collection. Many different countries have featured Santa on his travels, including Australia, who in 1977 showed Santa on a surfboard, Christmas Island who featured him being pulled by a pair of birds and – perhaps the most bizarre – a stamp from Chile which featured Father Christmas on a flying saucer.

Other possibilities for expanding your collection include Santa as he is portrayed by children (Royal Mail has issued several such stamps over the decades) and what he does when he's off duty (such as feasting with a variety of animals, as imagined by Christmas Island), as Christine Sanders explains: 'Some of the most interesting Santa stamps are those that feature Santa in the native environment and customs of the issuing country. For example, in 1977 Australia issued a stamp with Santa on a surfboard reminding us that in many countries, Christmas occurs during their summer. A sailing Santa was featured on the 1983 Bahamas issue.

'Since the 1980s, Christmas Island, Indian Ocean, has issued stamps with Santa interacting with local birds, fish, turtles and crabs. One stamp issued in 2005 showed Santa with two red crabs pulling his sleigh. Many countries have issued multiple stamps that side-by-side create a continuous design of Santa in his sleigh with reindeers or Santa arriving in a native village that is celebrating Christmas in local customs. One can learn much about the customs and traditions of foreign countries by studying their Christmas issues.'

The Christmas Philatelic Club welcomes members from around the world and publishes an award-winning journal The Yule Log which features articles about all aspects of Christmas philately. Annual membership is US$35 which includes four issues of the journal. Members also have access to a 'members only' section of the website. Find out more at: www.christmasphilatelicclub.org

Ten seasonal stamps

Up and down the country school children will be retelling the Nativity Story as proud parents look on. Adrian Keppel gets into the festive spirit and gives us a philatelic version of events in our regular stamp top ten



1 Liechtenstein 2006: The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus'.

2 Great Britain 1997: In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

3 West Germany 1979: While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her first-born, a son.

4 Bahamas 2012: She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

5 Bahamas 2013: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

6 Italy 2009: When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about'. So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

7 Croatia 2012: After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the East came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.'

8 Slovenia 2014: After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

9 New Zealand 2009: On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

10 Ecuador 2007: Now when they had departed, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, 'Arise, take the young child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him'.

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Society news

Swale Philatelic and Postcard Society recently met for the first meeting of their new season. Member Chris Rapley gave a display of old type numbered birthday cards and hot air balloons. His second display was on Scandinavian flora and fauna on stamps, a varied collection showing trees, fish, nature, mammals, marine life, domestic animals and insects. For society details Contact RM Browne on tel: 01795 425820.

Members of the **Rochdale Philatelic Society** recently welcomed guest speakers Stuart Calderbank and Barry Evans from Burnley Philatelic Society. Stuart began by explaining his collecting aim was to acquire one of everything (1840-2015) although he admitted he should have stopped at 1971. On show, besides his collection, was a desk weighing scale from 1840. Barry updated members on his specialist Universal Postal Union (UPU) collection. For Society information contact Neil, tel: 01706 665698; e-mail: neil.wharmby@gmail.com

A recent meeting at **Dundee and District Philatelic Society** saw the traditional 'President's Night' display given by Francis Podger FRPSL. His display featured World War II censorship mail in Singapore and this, with his informative talk, gave a clear insight into that era of our history. The evening also allowed members to congratulate Francis on his success at the Singapore 2015, where he received a Gold for his entry of 'Stamps Issued and Used in Singapore for Revenue Purposes 1826 to KGV' and Silver for his Literature Entry of 'Singapore: The Use and Development of Revenue Impressed Stamps, The Victorian Era to 2012'.

Stratford upon Avon Philatelic Society members recently showed off new acquisitions. John Potter presented a display of New Zealand stamps all shown back to front: each stamp had an advertisement printed (under the gum) on the back in a commercial venture by the Victorian post office. Meanwhile, Peter Collyer's new stamps from Panama were accompanied by several stock bonds from when the canal was being built, giving a useful and unexpected context to the early stamps and the excitement of the venture. For Society details contact Colin Fountain, tel: 01789 841 606.

Recent **Leamington & Warwick Philatelic Society** meetings have seen a display of damaged and delayed mail from Trevor Radway, along with censorship and excise duty examinations, while recent acquisitions showed rare 'Stockport' marks, a colourful display of Post Office publicity posters, and a complete collection of elusive village postmarks from all of the Scilly Islands. Laurence Kimpton's display 'Across the Middle East by Air and Land' was a highlight, describing the birth and growth of non-maritime mails from the UK to Iraq. For Society details contact Nick Bridgwater, tel: 01926-423685; website: https://sites.google.com/site/warwickshireps

The Queen Victoria £5 orange formed the basis of a recent display and presentation by Dr John Horsey to **The Royal Philatelic Society London**. Dr Horsey's presentation took a scientific look at the printings of the stamp and the shades and

STAMP FAIRS

4 December 2015

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Hopton Village Hall, Station Road, Hopton on Sea, NR31 9BE
01502 563759

5 December 2015

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Azelia Hall, Croydon Road
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St Marthas Church Hall, Cooden Sea Road, Little Common
01903 244875

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07702 270948

Leicester
The Holiday Inn, St Nicholas Circle; 0116 235 0441

Liverpool
St Columba Church Hall, Hillfoot Rd, Hunter Cross; 01226 755069

Powick
Village Hall, near Great Malvern
01283 820151

Stourbridge
Platters Cafe, Victoria Street
07813 260752

6 December 2015

Beverley
Norwood Methodist Church Hall, Norwood; 01909 563394

Birmingham
Irish Centre, High Street, Deritend, Digbeth, B12 0LN
01283 820151

9 December 2015

Nottingham
Nuttall Temple Centre, Nottingham Road
01283 820151

11 December 2015

London
Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, Russell Square
0208 946 4489

12 December 2015

Cardiff
City Hall, 01792 415293

Chester
Hoole United Reformed Church, Hoole Road, 01226 755069

Derby
Nunsfield House Community Hall, 33 Boulton Road, Alvaston
01909 563394

Folkestone
Trinity Church Hall, Sandgate Road, 07702 270948

Great Barr
Collingwood Centre, Collingwood Drive, Pheasey; 07765 792998

Northampton
The Abbey Centre, Overslade Close, East Hunsbury
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Preston
Barton Village Hall, Garstang Road (A6); 07943 174958

St Albans
Village Hall, 63 High Street
01582 876651

Teeside
Norton Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Norton

13 December 2015

Wokingham
St Crispins Centre, London Road
01923 674999

19 December 2015

Brighton
Good Shepherd Hall, 272 Dyke Road; 01903 244875

Finchley
Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane, Essex Park; 01582 876651

Hull
St Stephen's Church Hall, Freehold Street, off Spring Bank, HU3 1RB; 01909 563394

Thatcham
Thatcham Memorial Hall, Bath Road (A4); 01256 415699

20 December 2015

Dronfield
Coal Aston Village Hall, Coal Aston, near Sheffield
01909 563394

Hatfield
Ramada Hatfield, St Albans Road West; 01582 876651

Knowle
Knowle Village Hall, St Johns Close; 07765 792998

Luton
Ramada Encore, Luton Airport, Airport Way; 07710 683122

Maidstone
Royal British Legion Hall, B L Village New Road, Aylesford
01903 244875

22 December 2015

Stockport
Masonic Guildhall, Wellington Road South ; 01283 820151

papers involved, plus an analysis of the usage of the stamp. He also demonstrated fraudulent use of the stamp, such as bleaching out an Exchequer cancel to reuse the stamp postally, or carefully applying the postmark over a 'SPECIMEN' overprint. For Society details contact the Administrative Office on 020 7486 1044.



Basingstoke and District Philatelic Society are celebrating their eightieth anniversary with a limited edition presentation pack containing a mint set of the GB 1935 Silver Jubilee stamps. The set is believed to be the catalyst that led to the formation of the Society in 1935. The pack is available for £10, at the Society's annual stamp fair on 21 November at Costello School, Crossborough Hill, or for £11.50 by post, from the Society Secretary, c/o County Philatelic Auctions, Oakley Lane, Oakley, Basingstoke, RG23 7JZ; e-mail: county@stampauctions.co.uk.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Taw & Torridge Stamp Club



With a membership drawn from across North Devon, Taw & Torridge Stamp Club, which was established in 1971, welcomes members of all ages, whether interested in stamps, postal history, thematics or social philately. The group is part of the Wessex Philatelic Federation and members meet fortnightly between September and June in Barnstaple's Castle Centre, Castle Street.

Visiting speakers regularly display their collections at meetings and other activities include competitions, auctions, and bring and buy sales. There is also a lending library and an Exchange Packet of stamps for sale circulating between over forty members. The 2015/2016 programme has just been released and forthcoming meetings include a talk on the Penny Black and other European first issues (with Bryan Short) on 19 November, and a four-sheet competition based on the letter 'M' (3 December). The club currently has more than sixty active members and is particularly keen to attract younger collections. Beginners are welcomed. Anyone interested in finding out more is welcome to come along to one of the meetings to meet club members.

For more information, contact Mr A Austen, e-mail: andrewausten@lineone.net or visit the website: www.wessexpf.org.uk/TawTorridge/

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Worthing Stamp Auctions
The Richmond Room, Town Hall
Chapel Road, BN11 1HA
www.worthingstamps.com

28 December 2015
Aylesbury
Holiday Inn, Aston Clinton Road,
A41; 07710 683122

Gloucester
Churchdown Community Centre
01283 820151

Leeds
St Mary's Hall, Commercial
Street, Morley; 01909 563394

30 December 2015
Beverley
Norwood Methodist Church Hall,
Norwood; 01909 563394

COIN AUCTIONS

9 December 2015
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www.spink.com

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Warwick
Warwick & Warwick
The Lord Leycester Hotel,
Jury Street, CV34 4EJ
01926 499031
www.warwickandwarwick.com

COIN FAIRS

5 December 2015
London
Bloomsbury Hotel, 16-22 Great
Russell Street, WC1B 3NN
01694 731781

11 December 2015
Birmingham
National Motorcycle Museum,
Bickenhill, B92 0EJ
01694 731781

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16 December 2015
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Village Hall, 63 High Street,
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20 December 2015
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West, AL10 9RH
01582 876651

22 December 2015
Stockport
Masonic Guildhall, Wellington
Road South
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28 December 2015
Aylesbury
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All dates and venues are correct at the time of going to press.

Please check details with the event organisers before attending. Add your own event details at: www.stampandcoin.co.uk

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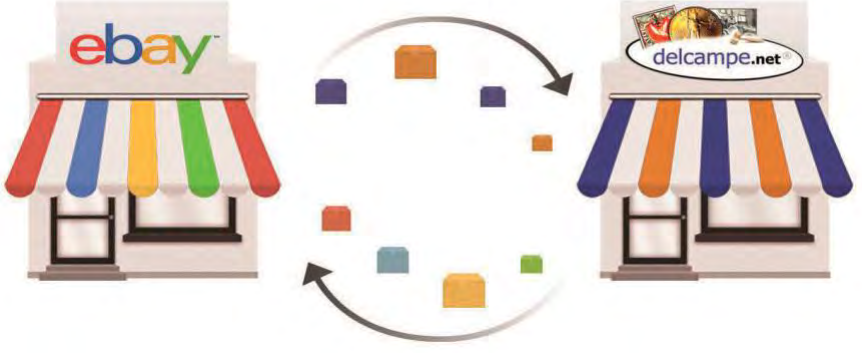
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In-depth listings

Your comprehensive guide to the latest new stamps from around the world

GREAT BRITAIN

(listed in every issue)

001 **75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain**, six non-denominated values in a miniature sheet
Issue date: July 16, 2015; Design: The Team from photographs (stamps). Sheet design by Supple Studio. Printer: International Security Printers, offset; Perforations: 14.25 x 14
Two phosphor bands. Perf 14¼ x 14.
Miniature sheet : contains (3 x 2 se-tenant)
1st (63p) – Pilots scramble to their Hurricanes
1st (63p) – Supermarine Spitfires of 610 Squadron, based at Biggin Hill, flying in close formation
1st (63p) – Armourer Fred Roberts re-arms a Spitfire (replacing ammunition boxes) whilst pilot Sgt Bernard Jennings talks to his mechanic
1st (63p) – ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service) Spotters under training in aircraft identification (with binoculars, and identification chart)
1st (63p) – Operations (Control) Room at Bentley Priory, headquarters of RAF Fighter Command
1st (63p) – Pilots of 32 Squadron, RAF Hawkinge, east Kent, relax between missions
Border: Winston Churchill visiting defence position near Hartlepool on July 31, 1940
Subsequent stamp issues were listed in the November 2015 *Stamp & Coin Mart*

002 **Machin definitive. Queen Elizabeth II, 'Long to Reign Over Us'**,
one self-adhesive value
Issue date: August, 2015; Design: Jeffery Matthews after relief of Queen Elizabeth by Arnold Machin; Printer: De La Rue, gravure; two phosphor bands; Perforations: die-cut 14.75 x 14 with elliptical cut-outs on vertical sides
Self-adhesive sheet stamp:

1st (63p) – Machin profile of Queen Elizabeth II in amethyst purple (bright lilac)
Stamp has new security overlay text, a repeating LONG TO REIGN OVER US
Notes: printed in sheets of 100 (two panes of fifty) with marginal print dates of 04/06/15 and 05/06/15. No formal release date given by Royal Mail; the earliest date of purchase from Post Offices reported by collectors to Stamp & Coin Mart (so far) is August 20, 2015).
Coding in the security overlay is O15R (instead of OVER), to the left of Queen's neck

The intervening 'Bumble Bees' issue was detailed in the November issue of Stamp & Coin Mart

003 **Celebrating 200 Years of the Gurkhas**, a 'commemorative sheet'
Issue date: August 20, 2015; Design: CDT Design, stamp design by Dick Davis after Anton Morris; Printer: Cartor, offset.
Die-cut perforations
Self-adhesive sheetlet: contains
1st (63p) x ten copies – Union flag, and ten labels depicting via prints and photographs scenes from the history of the Gurkha Brigade, and (final label) noting Gurkha Welfare Trust
The sheetlet was sold at £14.95, in a pack

004 **Machin definitive. Queen Elizabeth II, 'Long to Reign Over Us'**, one value in a self-adhesive booklet
Issue date: September 9, 2015; Printer: International Security Printers, gravure;
Two phosphor bands;
Die-cut perforations: 14.75 x 14
Self-adhesive booklet (£3.78): contains
1st (63p) x six copies in amethyst purple (bright lilac), stamps separately affixed to inside covers, with repeating security overlay text LONG TO REIGN OVER US
Overlay contains the coding O15R to left of Queen's neck, and GS (instead of GN) in wording behind Queen's hair
Cover bears Royal Mail logo and '6 x 1st', on ground in colour of the stamp
Inside front cover has recent portrait photograph of Her Majesty

005 **H.M. Queen Elizabeth II, Longest Reigning Monarch**, five gummed values in a miniature sheet
Issue date: September 9, 2015; Design: Sedley Place; Printing: contracted to FMNT (Fábrica Nacional de Moneda y Timbre), Madrid, Spain, in intaglio (recess) or gravure (the Machin definitive design. Two phosphor bands;
Perforations 14.75 x 14 with elliptical cut-ous, (Machin) or 14.2 x 13.9 (commemoratives, no elliptical cut-outs)
Miniature sheet: contains (separately perforated)
1st (63p) – City medal (1837) by William Wyon, and profile of Queen Elizabeth II, based upon Machin design. Recess printed in deep red
1st (63p) – Three-quarter profile of Queen Elizabeth II, after Dorothy Wilding photograph from April 1952, and profile of Queen Elizabeth II, based upon Machin design. Recess printed in deep red
1st (63p) – Machin profile (by Matthews after Machin sculpture), gravure printed in amethyst purple (bright lilac)
£1.52 – Badge of the House of Windsor (1938) featuring the Round Tower of Windsor Castle with Royal Standard flying, and profile of Queen Elizabeth II, based upon Machin design. Recess printed in purple
£1.52 – 'E' and Crown from the Queen's personal flag (1960), and profile of Queen Elizabeth II, based upon Machin design. Recess printed in purple
Notes: the first class amethyst purple Machin design has repeating security overlay text LONG TO REIGN OVER US. This contains the coding O15R, and also GM (instead of GN in reign) to right of Queen's hair
The miniature sheet when sold loose included a 1mm wide rouletted tab at left side carrying a bar code and paper certification notes

006 **Post and Go labels. Sea Travel**, six designs depicting cruise destinations
Issue date: September 16, 2015; Design: Osborne Ross, from paintings; Printer (basic label): International Security Printers, gravure; Coding / denomination and date thermographically in black by the machine.
Non-denominated.
Self-adhesive labels:
† – White Cliffs of Dover, seen from stern of ship
† – Hong Kong downtown
† – Sydney Opera House (and sailing yachts) seen through porthole
† – Limestone formations (sea stacks) of Ha Long Bay, Vietnam
† – Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and New York City (Manhattan) skyline
† – Canal in Venice, with gondola
Designs are affixed in sequence to the rolls.
A pre-printed strip of six designs (Up to 100g) was sold philatelically

007 **Animals of the First World War**, a 'commemorative sheet'
Issue date: September 17, 2015; Design: CDT Design, stamp design by Dick Davis after Anton Morris; Printer: Cartor, offset.



009









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Die-cut perforations
Self-adhesive sheetlet: contains
1st (63p) x ten copies – Union flag
Labels depict photographs of animals, including dogs and horses and carrier pigeon taken during the war
The sheetlet was sold at £14.95, in a pack

008 **Eighth Rugby World Cup, England and Wales**, eight values in se-tenant pairs
Issue date: September 18, 2015; Design: Hat-trick Design, from illustrations by Geoff Appleton; Printer, Cartor, offset, or International Security Printers, gravure printed booklet; Perforations 14.25 x 14
Sheet stamps (gummed):
2nd (54p) – Tackle of player running with ball
2nd (54p) – Forwards at scrummage, and scrum-half
1st (63p) – Player scoring try whilst being tackled
1st (63p) – Player making a conversion kick
£1.00 – Winger passing ball
£1.00 – Player completing a drop-goal
£1.52 – Ball emerging from ruck
£1.52 – Players in line-out, leaping
All designs bear the Rugby World Cup 2015 logo

Self-adhesive booklet (£3.78): contains
1st (63p) x 1 copy, Player scoring try whilst being tackled
1st (63p) x 4 copies, Machin profile of Queen Elizabeth II, in amethyst purple, with repeating security overlay text LONG TO REIGN OVER US.
1st (63p) x 1 copy, Player making a conversion kick
The Rugby stamps are set within illustrated surround; the Machin stamps have surround removed, and contain the security codings 015R and GC (for GN of REIGN)









013

ALDERNEY

(previously listed in September 2015 issue)

009 **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Longest Reigning Monarch**, one value
Issue date: September 9, 2015; Design: Bridget Yabsley, from photograph; Printer: Lowe-Martin, offset; Perforations: 12.4 x 12.4
£10 – Queen photographed at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, Canada, in July 2010
Notes: the stamp was issued in sheetlets containing a horizontal strip of five copies. The sheetlet was also available imperforate, along with a States of Guernsey £20 bankote, in a souvenir folder, priced at £95

ANTIGUA and BARBUDA

(previously listed in October 2015 issue)

010 **Chinese New Year. Year of the Horse**, two miniature sheets containing six values
Issue date: February 10, 2014; Designs: paintings by Liu Jiyu, 1918-1993 (China); Printer: not reported, offset;
Perforations: 14 x 14
Miniature sheet: $3.25 black horse; $3.25 black horse, and rearing grey horse; $3.25 piebald horse and black foal; $3.25 black and white and grey horses
Miniature sheet: $3.50 two piebald horses; $3.50 chestnut foal
Border depicts drawing of foal

011 **The Aloe**, six values in sheetlets and two miniature sheets
Issue date: June 23, 2014; Printing: offset;
Perforations: 13.75 x 13.75
Sheetlet: $4.75 Aloe sprout; $4.75 x two copies $4.75 barbed aloe leaves; $4.75 Aloe shoots, falling to left
Sheetlet: $4.75 Aloe with six shoots in pot; $4.75 x two copies Aloe leaves; $4.75 Aloe shoots, growing upwards
Miniature sheet: $9.50 Young aloe leaves; $9.50 Aloe leaf sliced
Miniature sheet: $9.50 Young aloe leaves; $9.50 four-branched aloe shoot

012 **Parrots of the World**, eight values in sheetlets and two miniature sheets
Issue date: June 23, 2014; Designs: after photographs; Printer, not reported, offset;
Perforations: 14 x 14
Sheetlet: contains (se-tenant)
$4.75 – *Erectus roratus*
$4.75 – *Ara arauana*
$4.75 – *Lorius lory*
$4.75 – *Aratinga solstitianus*
Sheetlet: contains (se-tenant)
$4.75 – *Ara arauana*
$4.75 – *Amazona finschi*
$4.75 – *Amazona guildingii*
$4.75 – *Psittacula krameri*
Miniature sheet: contains
$9.50 – *Trichoglossus haematodus*
$9.50 – *Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*
Miniature sheet: contains
$9.50 – *Ara macao*
$9.50 – *Amazona ochrocephala oratix*

013 **Christmas 2014. Paintings by Raphael,** four values
Printer: not reported, offset;
Perforations 14 x 14
90c - *The Aldobrandini Madonna* (1510)
$2.25 – *The Holy Family Beneath the Oak* (1518)
$3.50 – *Madonna with the Blue Diadem* (1510-1511)
$5 – *Incoronazione a Vergine, detta Pala Oddi* (detail, 1502-1504)

014 **Prince George of Cambridge**, two values in a sheetlet, and two miniature sheets
Issue date: January 2, 2015; Designs: from photographs; Printer: not reported, offset;
Perforations: 12.75 x 13
Sheetlet: contains $3.25 x three copies: Prince George with Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge; $3.25 x three copies: Prince George held by Prince William, Duke of Cambridge
Miniature sheet $9.50: Prince George in white baby suit held by the Duchess of Cambridge
Miniature sheet $9.50 Prince George in patterned shirt and black braces

CYPRUS

(previously listed in October 2015 issue)

015 **The Beauty of Akamas**, two values
Issue date: July 9, 2015; Design: George Papaioannou; Printer: Giesecke & Devrient Matsoukis, Athens, offset; Perforations: 13.8 x 13.9 (€0.34) or 13.9 x 13.8 (€0.64)
€0.34 – Coastal view on the Akamas peninsula
€0.64 – View in the Avakas Gorge
Notes: these stamps were printed in sheetlets of eight with illustrated borders

016 **EUROMED Postal Cooperation. Boats**, one value
Issue date: July 9, 2015; Design: Prodomos Apostolou; Printer: Giesecke & Devrient Matsoukis, Athens, offset;
Perforations: 13,8 x 13.9
€0.74 – Sailing boat, traditional open cargo boat; rowing boat, fishing boat, and diagram of Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea

ESTONIA

(previously listed in October 2015)

017 **Stories for Children. *The Story of Lotte Margihivik***, four self-adhesive values in a booklet
Issue date: May 30, 2015; Design: Indrek Ilves, after Heiki Emits; Printer: AS Vaba Maa, offset.
Die-cut perf 5 x 6.25; Self-adhesive booklet (€2.20), contains
55c – Kitten Bruno, and his house
55c – Rabbit Albert, and his house
55c – Bruno, Albert and puppy-girl Lotte walking together
55c – Lotte and lift up side of tower
Designs which are affixed adjacently to one

side of a flat panel (hang-sell booklet) depict characters celebrating Inventor's Day in the town of Gadgetville.

018 **Stories for Children. *Teistmoodi Eestí* (*Different Kind of Estonia*), a fantasy tale**, illustrated by one value in a booklet
Issue date: June 4, 2015; Design: Indrek Ilves, after Navitrolla; Printer: AS V aba Maa, offset; Perforations: 5 x 6.25
Self-adhesive booklet (4.80€): contains 1.20€ x four copies – Giraffe in meadow with its head poking through a cloud

019 **Estonian Heads of State series. Aleksander Warma (Varma)**, one value
Issue date: June 22, 2015; Design: Lembit Lohmus; Printer: AS Vaba Maa, offset; Perforations: 13.75 x 14
€0.55 – Alexsander Varma, 1890-1970
Notes: an Estonian government Minister 1926-1931, the Ambassador to Lithuania and Finland from 1931 to 1940 (nominally to 1944), Prime Minister in duties of the President 30 March, 1963 to 24 December, 1970, in exile in Sweden

020 **European Under-23 Athletics Championships, Tallinn, Estonia, July 9 to 12, 2015**, one value
Issue date: July 1, 2015; Design: Triin Heimann; Printer: AS Vaba Maa, offset; Perforations 13.75 x 14
€0.55 – Track and silver shoe

021 **Estonian Innovation**, four self-adhesive values
Issue date: July 6, 2015; Design: Indrek Ilves; Printer: AS Vaba Maa, offset; Perforations die-cut 6.25 x 5
(A) Self-adhesive sheet stamps, from sheets of 25 of one design
€1.30 – Fortumo (international mobile payment provider). Currency designators on mobile 'phone screen, arrows, globe, logo
€1.30 – Grabcad (CAD technical design and drawing program): modelled shapes
€1.30 – Skype (telecommunications software provider): phones, computer terminals and people having conversation
€1.30 – TransferWise (peer-to-peer money transfer service that originated in Estonia)
(B) Self-adhesive booklet (€5.20): contains one each of €1.30 Fortumo; €1.30 Grabcad; €1.30 Skype; €1.30 Transferwise, designs as stamps
Notes: this issue is a part of a series noting '100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia'

022 **Estonian Fauna. Otter**, one value
Issue date: August 25, 2015; Design: Sándor Stern; Printer: AS Vaba Maa, offset; Perforations: 13.75 x 13.75
€0.55 – Otter, *Lutra lutra*, carrying a fish it has caught
Notes: a maximum card was also released

023 **Town Coats of Arms. Paide**, one self-adhesive value
Issue date: September 9, 2015; Design: Indrek Ilves; Printer: AS Vaba Maa, offset, in sheets of 25; Perforations: die-cut 12.6 x 12.4
€0.55 – Coat of arms of the town of Paide (a fortress tower)
Notes: the tower is now a historical experience museum

024 **Fungi. The Deadly Webcap**, one value
Issue date: September 10, 2015; Design: Ülle Marks and Juri Kass; Printer: AS Vaba Maa, offset; Perforations: 13.75 x 13.75
€0.55 – The Deadly Webcap, *Cortinarius rubellus*, and skull (poison) symbol

FRANCE

(previously listed in September 2015 issue)

025 **150th anniversary of the French Red Cross**, ten values in two miniature sheets
Issue date: June 14, 2014; Design: Valérie Besser, depicting past Red Cross stamp designs (re-denominated); Printer: Phil@Poste, offset; Perforations 13 x 13
Miniature sheet – contains €0.61+€0.30 Sower and Red Cross on tablet (1914); €0.61+€0.30 Sower with overprinted Red Cross emblem (1914); €0.61+€0.30 Red Cross nurse, 1939; €0.61+€0.30 Hospital ship Charles Roux and shelled hospital (1918); €0.61+€0.30 Nurse inoculating child (1966)
Miniature sheet – contains €0.61+€0.30 Doctor and family with hospital patient (June 1940); €0.61+€0.30 portrait of the pathologist François Broussais (1972); €0.61+€0.30 symbolical design (1988); €0.61+€0.30 portrait of Henri Dunant (1958); €0.61+€0.30 Nurse and wounded soldier (1940)
Notes: the pair of sheets were sold in a Folder (Pack) at €12.00. The date of first availability has also been reported as June 10, 2014

026 **80th anniversary of the Re-opening of Paris Zoological Gardens**, one value and a miniature sheet
Issue dates: June 15, 2014 and July 23, 2014; Design: Eric Viennot; Printer: Phil@Poste, gravure; Perforations: 12.9 x 13.1
(A) sheet stamp
€0.98 – Lemur, jaguar, flamingo and giraffe (heads)
Issue date was June 15, 2014, printed in sheets of thirty
(B) miniature sheet. Contains
€0.98 – Lemur, jaguar, flamingo and giraffe (heads). Illustrated border
Issue date was July 23, 2014. The sheet was sold in a folder (pack) at €3.20

027 **Centenary of the death of Jean Jaurès, 1856-1914**, two values se-tenant
Issue date: June 17, 2014; Design and engraving: Louis Boursier; Printer: Phil@Poste, recess; Perforations: 13 x 13; issued in sheets of 48 stamps (24 pairs)
€0.61 – Portrait of the socialist politician and peace campaigner
€0.61 – Jaures making an outdoor speech
Notes: Jean Jaurès, who opposed mobilisation for the Great War, was assasinated on August 31, 1914

028 **Summer Stamp Salon, Paris. The Ceres stamp design of 1849**, sheetlet of 25 stamps
Issue date: June 17, 2014; Design: Jacques-Jean Barre; Printer: Phil@Poste, using various print methods on the one sheet; Imperforate
Sheetlet, contains five copies of each of
€1 – Ceres design (redrawn), printed by recess in deep carmine. Engraving by Elsa Catelin
€1 – Ceres design (redrawn), printed typographically in orange-vermilion
€1 – Ceres design (redrawn), printed by recess in orange-vermilion. Engraving by Elsa Catelin
€1 – Ceres design (redrawn), printed typographically in deep carmine
Notes: two stamps in the sheetlet are inverted. This sheetlet appears not to have had a free distribution (easy availability in sufficient quantity); the same applied to a set of ten different stamp-on-stamp miniature sheets with nominal issue date of June 15, 2015 (which are not listed here as they have never been seen)

029 **Tourism. Coaraze, in Alpes-Maritimes,** one value
Issue date: June 18, 2014; Design: Sylvia Cornet; Engraving: Elsa Catelin; Printer: Phil@Poste, recess; Perforations: 13.3 x 13.3
€0.61 – View of Coaraze village

030 **'The 1950s'**, six values in a miniature sheet
Issue date: June 19, 2014; Design: Stéphane Humbert-Basset; Printer: Phil@Poste, gravure; Perforations: 13 x 13
€0.66 – Cars (a Panhard Dyna 2 of 1953 and a Peugeot 203) parked in street
€0.66 – Poster by Raymond Savignac Pour



015



016



017



019



022



024





025



026



027







030



033



043

votre travail, l'electrcité (woman with broom formed from electrical wire)
€0.66 – Les Loisirs, family packing a Renault Dauphine for their August vacation
€0.66 – Cinema usherette with sales tray
€0.66 – Music: brass band playing
€0.66 – Fashion models wearing dresses in styles of c1950 and c1960
The third stamp depicts the family packing a pink transistor radio – this model of transistor radio was not available until the 1960s

031 **Tourism and Archaeology. The Prehistoric Grave Site and Standing Stones at Locmariaque**, one value
Issue date: June 20, 2014; Design and engraving: Sarah Bougault; Printer: Phil@Poste, recess; Perforations: 13.3 x 13.3
€0.61 – Grand menhir and grave entrance, Locmariaque, Morbihan, western Brittany

032 **Greetings. Baccarat Valentines**, sheetlet of five stamps
Issue date: June 20, 2014; Design: Maison Baccarat (crystal glassware maker and vendor); Printer: Phil@Poste, recess and serigraphy (screen-printing); Perforations: 13 x 13
Sheetlet, contains five separately arranged copies of:
3.00€ – Zénith crystal chandelier (in red), and golden rays
Notes: stamp is heart-shaped, and in a design previously used in January 2014 (as a €0.61), in new colour. The printing is stated to incorporate ground glass powder

033 **Arts. Jean Dufy, 1888-1964**, one value
Issue date: June 22, 2014; Design: Valérie Besser after photograph by Jacques Bailly; Printer: Phil@Poste, gravure; Perforations 13.3 x 12.9
€1.65 – The Seine seen from the Pont de Carrousel (Paris)

034 **French National Philatelic Congress 2014, Paris**, one value
Issue date: June 21, 2014; Design and engraving: Claude Andreotto; Printer: Phil@Poste, recess; Perforations: 13.4 x 12.9
€0.61 – Institut de France, quai de Conti, Paris. Label: Seine bridge
Notes: issued in sheets of 36 stamps each se-tenant with label

035 **50th anniversary of INSERM (L'Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médical)**, one value
Issue date: July 3, 2014; Sylvie Patte and Tanguy Besset from INSERM photograph by K Matho and J Livet; Printer: Phil@Poste, offset; Perforations: 13.4 x 13.2
€0.66 – Motor nuclei of mice, and colour-bar (key)

036 **250th anniversary of the death of the Marquise de Pompadour, 1721-1764**, one value
Issue date: July 4, 2014; Design and engraving: Claude Jumulet; Printer: Phil@Poste, recess; Perforations: 13.2 x 13.4
€0.66 – Portrait painting of the noblewoman Jeanne-Antoinette Poission, Marquise de Pompadour, the 'official mistress' of King Louis XV and uncrowned Queen, by Quentin de La Tour

037 **Arts. Jean Fautrier, 1898-1964**, one value
Issue date: July 11, 2014; Design: Stéphanie Ghinéa; Printer: Phil@Poste, gravure; Perforations: 13 x 13.3
€1.65 – Les boîtes de conserve (bottling jars), 1947

038 **Centenary of the General Mobilisation upon the outbreak of the Great War**, sheetlet of twenty stamps and labels
Issue date: August 2, 2014; Design: Patrice Serres; Engraving: André Lavergne; Printer: PhilaPoste, recess; Perforations 12.9 x 13.3
€0.66 – Mobilised troops on march; agricultural and horticultural workers (harvesters)

IRELAND

(previously listed in November 2015 issue)

039 **Definitives. Irish Fauna series. Fox and Otter**, two self-adhesive values, from booklets
Issue date: July 1, 2015; Design: from photographs; Printer: Cartor, offset; Perforations: die-cut 13.5 x 13.5
Self-adhesive booklet (€7.00) – contains
70c – Fox, *Vulpes vulpes* x ten copies
Booklet cover bears photograph of fox and depiction of stamp
Self-adhesive booklet (€10.50) - contains
€1.05 – Otter, *Lutra lutra*
Booklet cover bears photograph of otter and depiction of stamp
Notes: stamps are separately spaced, plain white surround, on inside booklet covers. Pairs (two of same stamp) were available philatelically, cut from the booklets

040 **Irish Fauna series. Birds**, two self-adhesive values, from coils
Issue date: July 1, 2015; Design: from photographs; Printer: Ashton Potter USA, offset; Perforations: die-cut 11.1 x 11.1
Self-adhesive coil stamps:
70c – Great Spotted Woodpecker, *Dendrocopus major*
70c – Mute Swan (head), *Cygnus olor*
Notes: the two designs are alternately affixed to the vertical coil backing (separately, plain white surround). 70c represents the Irish internal letter rate (to 100g) from July 1, 2015

041 **Mute Swan. SOAR (Stamp on a Roll)**, one design
Issue date: July 1, 2015; Design: from photograph; Printing: high resolution digital print
Self-adhesive vending machine label
† – Mute swan (head)
Available from machines in many different denominations, as requested

042 **Art and Design. Eileen Gray, 1878-1976. Furnishings**, four values in sheets and a booklet
Issue date: August 13, 2015; Design: from photographs supplied by ARAM Designs; Printer: Cartor, offset; Perforations: 13.3 x 13.3
(A) Sheet stamps. Sheetlet of sixteen stamps containing four se-tenant blocks of four
70c – Toiletry cabinet / screen
70c – Transat chair
70c – Adjustable table
70c – Cabinet with pivoting drawers
(B) Prestige Booklet (€12.00): contains four panes of the stamps
Cover depicts a chair (different to stamp)
Notes: the five works depicted date from the years between 1926 and 1929. An exhibition of work by Eileen Gray (artist, architect and Modernist furniture designer) is being held at the National Gallery of Ireland

043 **The Five Senses**, five values
Issue date: September 10, 2015; Design: Zinc Design (cartoon-graphic style); Printer: Cartor, by mixed process (principally offset, with embellishments). Perforations: 13.25 x 13.25
(A) Gummed sheet stamps
70c – Taste. Mouth with tongue
€1.05 – Touch. Hand with extended forefinger
€1.70 – Hearing. Ear
€2.80 – Smell. Nose
The Taste design has strawberry flavoured gum; The Touch design uses thermographic ink, which changes colour when rubbed; The Hearing design has a raised thermographically printed layer over the ear which creates sound when rubbed; The Smell design is impregnated with a minty fragrance

(B) Self-adhesive sheet stamp
€1.25 – Sight. Eye
The stamp is printed in black and deep grey on transparent plastic, and affixed to white backing paper (the transparency is not obvious until it is removed from the backing). The gutter pair was available philatelically

ISLE of MAN

(previously listed in October 2015 issue)

044 **Celebrating the Birth of Princess Charlotte of Cambridge**, two values
Issue date: June 1, 2015 (not confirmed); Design: as 2013 stamps marking Royal Wedding of Kate and William and depicting engagement announcement photographs, but redated (imprint) 2015 at foot. Printer: not reported. Perforations: 15 x 14.
Sheetlet: contains eight stamps and four labels:
£1 x 4 copies – Catherine Middleton (later Duchess of Cambridge)
Labels: 'announcing the birth of HRH Princess Charlotte Elizabeth Diana of Cambridge'
£1 x 4 copies – Prince William (Duke of Cambridge)
Notes: a gutter pair of two stamps and label were available philatelically

045 **The Reign of Queen Elizabeth II**, eight values
Issue date: June 18, 2015; Design: The Fresh Group, from archive photographs; Printer: BDT, offset; Perforations: 14 x 14.6
44p – Coronation ceremony, 1953: Queen seated in King Edward's Chair holding orb and sceptre, and bishop Arthur Michael Ramsey of Durham
44p – Investiture of Prince Charles as Prince of Wales, Caernarvon Castle, July 1, 1969
77p – Queen attending an official function, Silver Jubilee, 1977
77p – Queen in robes of Order of the Garter, at ceremony
93p – Queen riding Burmese and saluting, during Trooping of the Colour ceremony, Horseguards Parade, Westminster
93p – Queen and Prince Philip riding in State Coach, Golden Jubilee celebrations, 2002
£1.24 – Queen in white coat and hat, Diamond Jubilee celebrations, 2012
£1.24 – Queen at State Opening of Parliament, Westminster Palace (recent)
This issue was linked by Isle of Man PO to (later) celebrations of the Longest Reign by a British monarch

046 **50th anniversary of The Curraghs Wildlife Park**, six values
Issue date: July 3, 2015; Design: Home Strategic; Printer: Cartor, offset; Perforations: 14.5 x 14.25
44p – Red Panda, *Ailurus fulgns*
44p – Humboldt Penguin, *Spheniscus humboldti*
95p – Ruffled Lemur, *Varecia variegata*
£1.15 – Waldrapp Ibis, *Geronticus eremita*
£1.24 – Fishing Cat (from SE Asia), *Prionallurus viverrinus*
£2.38 – Rodrigues fruit bat, *Pterepus rodricensis*
Notes: the Nature Reservation and zoo (with breeding programme) in the northern part of Man. The Park has successfully bred the endangered Rodrigues bat (from the outer island of Mauritius).
The photographs were all taken by members of the Isle of Man Photographic Society (credited on the individual stamp imprints)

047 **Old Buses**, six values
Issue date: July 15, 2015; Design: EJC Design after illustrations by Peter Harvey; Printer: Cartor, offset; Perforations: 13.25 x 13.25
44p – Douglas Corporation Transport Leyland Cub KPZ1 with crew, outside Omnibus Depot in York Road, Douglas
60p – Isle of Man Road Services Leyland /MCW Olympic HC40 (introduced 1948), leaving Ballasalla
77p – Isle of Man Road Services Leyland Tiger PS1 (1940s), outside bus station
93p – Douglas Corporation Transport Daimler CWA6 (introduced 1945), outside Douglas Railway Station
147p – Leyland Titan PD1 (introduced 1946), outside Ramsey Town Hall
186p – Douglas Corporation Transport AFC Regent 1 (1933-1939, in service until 1967), on Prospect Hill, Douglas

LUXEMBOURG

048 **Radio Amateurs of Luxembourg**, one value
Issue date: March 13, 2012; Design: Jean-Philippe Janus; Printer: bPost, Belgium, offset; Perforations 11.25 x 11.5
€0.60 – Emblem of Réseau Luxembourgeois des Amateurs d'Ondes (RL) and oscilloscope display

049 **75th anniversary of the Luxembourg Table Tennis Federation**, one value
Issue date: March 13, 2012; Design: Advantage Communication; Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium, offset; Perforations: 11.25 x 11.25
€0.60 – Table tennis bat and ball

050 **50th anniversary of Institut Grand-Ducal (Arts et Lettres)**, one value
Issue date: March 13, 2012; Design: Wit Nicolas; Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium, offset; Perforations: 11.35 x 11.35
€0.60 – Sculpture by Wit made of bricks

051 **10th anniversary of introduction of Euro Banknotes and Coins**, one value
Issue date: March 13, 2012; Design: M&V Concept; Printer: Cartor, offset and embossed; Perforations: 13 x 13
€0.85 – '10', the '1' constructed from bank-note cut-outs, and the '0' constructed from coins

052 **Comic Strip Cartoons by Gab Weis, 1926-1994**, five values in a self-adhesive sheetlet
Issue date: May 15, 2012; Design: Serge Weis; Printer: Cartor, offset; Die-cut perforations 12.5 x 12.5; Non-denominated
A (60c) – Mil (portrait of a boy)
A (60c) – Man smoking pipe, and young man
A (60c) – Children in Scout uniforms
A (60c) – Infuriated man using a chasing tool
A (60c) – King (wearing party crown) and man
Notes: border of sheetlet, which is freeform shape, carries other Weis cartoons and a self-portrait with signature

053 **50th anniversary of STATEC (Bureau of Statistics)**, one value
Issue date: May 16, 2012; Design: Rose de Claire; Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium, offset; Perforations: 12.5 x 12.5
€0.60 – Graph

054 **Europa 2012. Visit…**, two values
Issue date: May 15, 2012; Design: Linda Bos (montages); Printer: Cartor, offset; Perforations: 13.5 x 13.5
€0.60 – Luxembourg structures of the past (castle, viaduct, mine winding gear, palace) and sculpture Gëlle Fra (World War I memorial)
€0.60 – Luxembourg structures of present day (bank buildings, turbine, etc) and the Water Tower at Dudelange

















045













055 **Centenary of the Luxembourg Olympic Committee, and London 2012 Olympic Games**, two values
Issue date: May 15, 2012;
Design: Cropmark; Printer: Enschedé, offset;
Perforations: 14.25 x 14.75
€0.60 – Emblem of Comité Olympique et Sportif Luxembourg (lion's head) and Olympic rings
€1.10 – LOCOG (Olympic 2012) official logo set against Union flag (GB)
Notes: both values printed in sheetlets of ten (5 x 2) with illustrated borders (past sports stamps on €0.60 sheet and flag on €1.10 sheet)

056 **Engagement of Crown Prince Guillaume and Stéphanie de Lannoy**, one value and a miniature sheet with two values
Issue date: October 18, 2012;
Design: Binsfeld, after photographs by Jean-Claud Ernst; Printer: Cartor, offset;
Perforations: 13.75 x 13.75
€0.60 – Prince Guillaume Jean Joseph Marie de Luxembourg-Nassau (born 1981) and Countess Stéphanie de Lannoy (born 1984), from Ronse, Belgium
Miniature sheet: contains (se-tenant right to left)
€0.60 – As sheet stamp
€0.85 – Three-quarter length photograph of the couple

057 **Art and Design Competition for Young People. 'Potable Water'**, two values
Issue date: September 25, 2012;
Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium, offset;
Perforations: 11.35 x 11.35
€0.60 – People and animals crowded beneath a giant stand-pipe, by Louise Drouet, aged eleven
€0.85 – Row of houses on a hill, and tap filling pail, by Belinda Torres, aged fifteen

058 **'Fun and Liberty'**, second issue. Paragliding and Diving, two values
Issue date: September 25, 2012; Design: Timo Wuerz (paintings); Printer: Cartor, offset;
Perforations 13.25 x 13
Sheetlet: contains (strip of five)
€0.60 – Paragliders over a bend in the Mosel River (Luxembourg)
Sheetlet: contains (strip of five)
€0.85 – Diver over a coral reef
Notes: sheets have enlarged lower borders with similar illustrations to stamp design; the €0.85 images were inspired by the artist's experiences in the Maldive Islands

059 **'Art and Mobility'**, three values depicting innovative architecture amd design in transport
Issue date: September 25, 2012;
Designs: drawing by Christian Frantzen;
Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium, offset;
Perforations: 11.35 x 11.35
€1.20 – Belval-Université station in Esch sur Alzette, by Jim Clemes
€2.20 – Footbridge in Esch sur Alzette, by Metaform and Ney & Partners
€4.00 – Elevated connection (walkway) between Upper Cité of Luxembourg and Pfaffenthal (precinct), by Steinmetz DeMeyer

060 **Royal Wedding of Crown Prince Guillaume and Stéphanie de Lannoy**, one value in a miniature sheet
Issue date: October 20, 2012; Design: Binsfeld; Printer: Cartor, offset and embossed;
Perforations: 13.25 x 13.25
Miniature sheet: €4.00 monogram of the Crown Prince (embossed) and photograph of the couple by Jean-Claud Ernst
Notes: the sheet was available at eight post offices on 20 October; it was also available in a Presentation Folder containing mint and First Day Cover

061 **Grand Duke Henri. ATM label**, one design
Issue date: December 4, 2012; Design from Ducal portrait by Guillaume Broux. Printed by offset (base label). Perforations: die-cut 12.5 x 11.
Self-adhesive automatic teller machine label:
† – Portrait in deep blue, repeating text POSTES LUXEMBOURG in grey
Notes: publicly accessible Hytech machines printed labels with tall and rounded numerals and Euro sign in the denomination, and 20-digit code. The philatelic service made available labels from a Hytech desktop printer with narrow zeros and Euro sign, and 21-digit code

062 **60th anniversary of the European Court of Justice**, one value
Issue date: December 4, 2012; Design: Trink & Kraemer; Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium;
Perforations 12.5 x 12.5
€0.85 – Villa Vauban in Luxembourg Cité, the original seat of the Court

063 **Christmas 2012**, two values
Issue date: December 4, 2012; Design: Michael Olmic; Printer: Cartor, offset and 'plate gliding with defragmented film coating (for metallic optically variable effect); Perforations: 13 x 13
€0.60 + €0.05 – Delivery post box, tree, stars and shooting star
€0.85 + €0.10 – Red card envelope, Christmas tree, stars and candle flame
Notes: printed in sheets of twelve (3 x 4) with illustrated borders. Surcharge to welfare charities. A set of charity postal stationery postcards was also released

064 **Trades of Yesteryear**, third issue in series, four values
Issue date: December 4, 2012; Design: Jacques Doppée (paintings); Printer: Cartor, offset and gold foil embossed; Perforations: 12.9 x 13.25, or 13.25 x 12.9 (€0.85 and €1.10)
€0.60 + €0.05 – Washerwomen, on banks of river
€0.85 + €0.10 – Hatter in workshop, with tools
€1.10 + €0.10 – Farmer. Harvest scene (farm family in fields)
€1.20 + €0.25 – Market Gardener. Growers with their produce in baskets at city market
Notes: surcharge to welfare charities. Each design has a golden emblem (clothes beating paddle, hat-frame, four-legged pot, basket)

065 **European Year of Citizens**, one value
Issue date: March 12, 2013; Design: Binsfeld; Printer: Cartor, offset; Perforations 13 x 13.
€0.60 – Talking heads
Notes: stamp has an embedded emblem for connection to a smart (web) ap

066 **700th anniversary of the death of Count Henry VII of Luxembourg, 1278/79-1313,** one value
Issue date: March 12, 2013; Design: M & V Concept; Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium, offset; Perforations: 11.4 x 11.4
€1.10 – The death of Henry, the Holy Roman Emperor, at Buonconvento, from a fourteenth-century depiction
Notes: printed in sheetlet of ten with illustrated borders depicting imperial black eagle and Luxembourg red lion (both based on garments of Henry on his tomb in Pisa Cathedral, sculpted by Tino di Camaino)

067 **150th anniversary of the UGDA (Musical and Theatrical Association)**, one value
Issue date: March 12, 2013; Design: Repères Communication; Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium, offset; Perforations: 11.4 x 11.4
€0.60 – Jubilee emblem (1863-2013)
Notes: founded as the Allgemeiner Luxemburger Musikverein

068 **Centenary of Lycée Technique Privé Emile Metz (LTPEM)**, one value
Issue date: March 12, 2013; Design: Post Luxembourg; Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium, offset; Perforations 11.4 x 11.4
€0.60 – Building of the private technical

secondary school

069 **50th anniversary of Round Table Luxembourg**, one value
Issue date: March 12, 2013; Design: Plan K; Printer: bPost Stamps, Belgium, offset; Perforations 11.4 x 11.4
€0.60 – Round Table emblem

POLAND

(previously listed in September 2015 issue)

070 **150th anniversary of the birth of Stefan Zeromski, novelist and dramatist**, one value
Issue date: October 14, 2014; Design: Agata Tobolczyk; Printer: PWPW, offset in sheets of nine with illustrated borders; Perforations: 11.5 x 11.25 with elliptical cut-outs
4.20zl – Photograph of Zeromski, 1864-1925, and books on bookshelf

071 **Poland, World Men's Volleyball Champions, 2014**, sixteen values in a sheetlet
Issue date: October 18, 2015; Design: Jacek Konarzewski, incorporating team member photographs. Printer: PWPW, offset; Perforations: 11.75 x 11.5 with elliptical cut-outs
Sheetlet: contains fourteen stamps and two labels (medal ceremony and medals)
1zl – Stéphane Antiga (trainer)
1zl – Piotra Nowakowski
1zl – Michała Winiarski
1zl – Dawida Konarski
1zl – Rafała Buszek
1zl – Pawe³ Zagumny
1zl – Karol Kłos
1zl – Andrzej Wrony
1zl – Mariusz Wisz³y
1zl – Fabien Drzyzgi
1zl – Michał Kubiak
1zl – Krzysztof Ignaczak
1zl – Paweł Zatorski
1zl – Marcin Mozdzonek
1zl – Mateusz Mika
1zl - Philippe Blain (trainer)

072 **Stars of Stage and Screen**, three values and a miniature sheet
Design: Marzanna Dabrowska, from photographs; Printer: PWPW, offset; Perforations: 11.5 x 11.5 with elliptical cut-outs
1.75zl – Tola Mankiewiczówna, 1900-1985, opera, operetta, cabaret and film star; broadcaster
2.35zl – Antoni Fertner, 1874-1959, film actor (first appearance, 1908), wearing hat
4.20zl – Leocadia Halama, stage name Loda Halama, 1911-1996, dancer and choreographer, photographic model, actress
Miniature sheet: contains 1.55zl; 2.35zl; 4.20zl

073 **Christmas 2014**, two values
Issue date: November 14, 2014; Design: : Agnieszka Sanciewicz, depicting stained glass windows; Printer: PWPW, gravure; Perforations: 11.5 x 11.5
2.35zl – The Holy Family
5.20zl – Adoration of the Magi

074 **450th anniversary of the Birth of William Shakespeare, 1564-1616**, one value
Issue date: Novermber 21, 2014; Design: Aleksandra Pietrzak; Printer: PWPW, gravure; Perforations: 11.4 x 11.75
4.50zl – The drowning of Ophelia, a scene from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

075 **600th anniversary of Diplomtic Relations between Poland and Turkey (the Ottoman Empire)**, one value in a miniature sheet
Issue date: November 28, 2014; Design: Maciej Jedrysik; Printer: PWPW, offset; Perforations: 11.25 x 11.5
Miniature sheet 5.00zl – Ambassadorial delegations travelling and being received in Royal Court

076 **'World Youth Day' celebrations orgaised by Catholic bishops**, two values
Issue date: December 19, 2014; Design: Agnieszka Sanciewicz; Printer: PWPW, offset; Perforations: 11.25 x 11.25 with elliptical cut-outs.
1.75zl – WYD logo and young people forming circle (symbolical)
Issued in a sheetlet of twelve stams
5zl – WYD logo and skyline of Kracow
Issued in sheetlet of six

077 **23rd Grand Finale of The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity (fund-raising event)**, one value
Issue date: January 7, 2015; Design: Magdalena Jablonska, Catherine Sasin, Gawel Andrzejewski & Jerzy Owsiak; Printer: PWPW, offset; Perforations: 11.5 x 11.5 with elliptical cut-outs
2.35zl - Heart, with inscriptions

SOUTH GEORGIA and SOUTH SANDWICH ISLANDS

(previously listed in June 2015 issue)

079 **The *Viola* / *Dias*, last of the British Steam Trawlers**, four values and a miniature sheet
Issue date: May 21, 2015; Design: Andrew Robinson; Printer: BDT, offset; Perforations: 14 x 14
70p – The *Viola* fishing in the North Sea, as part of the Hellyer of Hull 'boxing fleet', 1906-1914
70p – The *Viola* serving as an armed trawler on anti-submarine patrol (under Admiralty requisition), off the Faroe Islands c1915
80p – The *Dias* (the *Viola* renamed under new ownership) whaling off the coast of Africa, in 1920s
£1.25 – Crew from the *Dias* during a sealing trip to South Georgia (before 1964)
Miniature sheet £3.25 – The Viola is involved in the sinking of UB 115 off the coast of Northumberland, September 29, 1918
Notes: the Viola was built in 1906; as the Dias she was used for sealing and as a support ship for Expeditions visiting South Georgia (after the whaling base there closed in 1964)

ZIMBABWE

(previously listed in November 2015 issue)

080 **Major Drystone Ruins of Zimbabwe**, four values and a miniature sheet
Issue date: February 24, 2015; Design from drawings of ruins in recent times; Printer: NatPrint, Harare, offset; Perforations 14.2 x 14.2 (set and miniature sheet)
40c – Ruins of Chisvingo
75c – Ruins of Dhlo Dhlo
85c – Ruins of Khami
$1 – Ruins of Nalatale
Miniature sheet – contains the four values se-tenant

081 **A Focus on Victoria Falls (definitives)**, ten values and a miniature sheet
Issue date: April 30, 2015; Designs: paintings, of sights in the town of Victoria Falls; Printer: NatPrint, Harare, offset; Perforations: 13.9 x 14.2
10c – Victoria Falls Bridge (Falls in background)
15c – 'Elephant interaction': elephant riders
20c – 'View inside the rain forest'
25c – Makishi dancers (with their permanently worn giant costume masks)
40c – Zambezi white waters (dinghy riding river rapids)
60c – Victoria Falls Station (station buildings and train)
75c – The Big Tree (a gigantic old baobab)
80c – Masks and curios
85c – Statue of David Livingstone
$1 – View of Falls and gorge from Devil's
Miniature sheet – contains the ten values se-tenant













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The Royal Mint launches Agincourt coin

The Royal Mint has produced a £5 coin on behalf of Alderney, to mark the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt.

Regarded as one of history's greatest military victories for England's King Henry V, the Battle of Agincourt took place on 25 October, 1415; 600 years later a £5 coin will recall the events with a reverse showing a scene from the battle. The designer of the reverse, Glyn Davies, explained that the image shows 'the overwhelming odds against the diseased and weakened English army that defeated that of the French.'



The Royal Mint's Director of Commemorative Coin, Anne Jessopp, said: 'The Royal Mint has been producing coinage for the kings and queens of Britain for over 1,000 years, including coins from the reign of King Henry V, so it is apt that in 2015 we should mark this important anniversary.'

'I tried to get a sense of the mayhem and confusion that the French forces fell into and the significant role the archers performed in the battle,' Glyn Davies continued. 'The design shows a lightly armoured archer in the foreground with a hatchet or hammer, weapons thought to have caused damage and deaths to the French knights as did suffocation in the mud. The French are depicted in heavy armour and on horseback. Trees surround the field as they also played a significant role in the French defeat.'





The limited edition coin will be struck for Alderney in 22 carat gold and in sterling silver to Proof finish. For more information visit: www.royalmint.com

TALKING TOKENS

Scottish Communion Tokens

Thanks to the proclivity of Henry VIII to divorce (or behead) his wives, the struggle between Roman Catholicism and Lutheran Protestantism in England had been resolved by 1534; the Protestant Church of England, with the monarch in close partnership, ruled supreme. On the Continent matters remained unresolved, with the Holy Catholic Church and the Reformed Church of Martin Luther at each other's throats across the borders of several countries. Within Lutheran ranks nagging fears that breakaway groups and factions might be enemies within resulted in a decision that the truly faithful must carry a mark signifying their worthiness to participate in church rituals. As a result, each believer was given a small leaden token which he/she had to present when attending to participate in Holy Communion.

In Scotland the Reformation occurred in 1560 with the Establishment of the Church of Scotland. Stewart monarchs and their Roman Catholic supporters caused friction and conflict from the outset. A wave of schisms also weakened the established church and led to the formation of rival Scottish churches. Distrust on all sides soon led to the issuing of lead tokens to distinguish friend from foe.

To obtain a token the applicant had to undergo rigorous questioning and religious knowledge tests. Searching investigations were also made among neighbours regarding the applicant's character, morals, drinking habits and church attendance. Successfully jumping those hurdles entitled the applicant to have his/her name added to the list of those who would receive an attendance token for the next Holy Communion at a secret outdoor location.

Rituals regarding the casting of the lead tokens were equally strictly applied. The blacksmith, always a member of the congregation, had to melt the old tokens in the presence of a church elder who took possession of the newly cast tokens and kept them safe until the time came to issue them to the selected communicants. The token's inscription included a Table Number which told the holder where to sit when the Communion service commenced. At the end of the service all tokens were collected by the elders. Fortunately for today's collectors a few losses always seemed to occur. They remain buried beneath grass roots until modern metal detectorists find them.



A place at Table 6 for the 1843 Holy Communion service of the Kinfauns (Perthshire) Free Church of Scotland. The biblical reference – Corinthians 1; chapter 11; verse 28 – reads: But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup

Images courtesy of Cowbright's Emporium on eBay where many interesting token lots may be viewed.

New Francis Drake coin



To mark the 475th anniversary of the birth of Sir Francis Drake, Pobjoy Mint has revealed the design of a new coin issued on behalf of the British Virgin Islands Government.

The design on the coin features a map of the British Virgin Islands with an image of the ship *Defiance* heading through what is now known as the Sir Francis Drake Channel. A cameo portrait of Drake is also shown. The obverse carries an effigy of Queen Elizabeth II by Ian Rank-Broadley FRBS.

Described as 'one of the greatest sea captains of all time', Drake was born in Devonshire around 1540 and first took to the seas at the age of twelve or thirteen. He was commissioned by Queen Elizabeth I, as a privateer, to sail for the Americas, and was the first to pass from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast of South America. In 1577 Queen Elizabeth selected him to be the head of an expedition that was to sail around the world and after achieving this he returned to England and was knighted aboard *The Golden Hind* in 1581.

The coin is available in cupro nickel, in a $1 denomination and in proof sterling silver with a $10 value, and has a diameter of 38.6 mm.

Celtic sword coin found in Kent





A metal detectorist has found a small Iron Age gold coin 'of the highest rarity' near Folkestone, on former land of the Cantiaci who gave their name to the county and its capital Canterbury.

The coin is an early gold quarter stater of Armorica ('country by the sea'), minted *c.*250-175 BC in Normandy by the Baiocasses ('with blond curls') whose name survives in Bayeux, where the famous tapestry was embroidered.

According to Celtic coin expert Chris Rudd, the coin is an important discovery. The coin 'belongs to a small series of Gallic philippi, the earliest gold coins struck in Gaul, copying the gold staters of Philip II of Macedon (359-336 BC) and his successors,' Chris explained. 'This small series of philippi – gold staters, half staters and quarter staters, all exceedingly rare – are known as "Normandy Sword" types, because they carry a characteristically Celtic sword – a few show two swords – with a distinctive anthropomorphic hilt, which demonstrates the style of sword elite Gallic and other Celtic warriors used in the 3rd to 1st century BC).

'The swords on Normandy Sword philippi are important because they apparently indicate why these extremely rare gold coins were made – as military payments to Armorican warriors… The Normandy Sword gold quarter stater found near Folkestone seems to be an unpublished type not previously recorded and may be unique. This is the first recorded Normandy Sword coin discovered in Britain. Did it find its way to Folkestone by way of cross-channel trade? Or was it brought by a refugee fleeing from some bloody battle of the Somme? We'll never know.'

This early and perhaps unique piece of Celtic war-money, made to pay the wages of a 'Norman' warrior, will be sold by auction in Aylsham by Chris Rudd on 17 January, 2016. Find out more at: www.celticcoins.com

Auction Highlights





Baldwin's recent sale of British 18th-century tokens, included a John Gregory Hancock, Copper Penny of 1800. The piece featured an obverse view of the interior of a workshop, an artist's model and mask to left, while the reverse showed a four-line inscription marked by punches: 'DESIGN FOR I. G. HANCOCK'S TOKEN', with the G's of DESIGN and the artist's initial upside down and reversed, as was the K of HANCOCK. Described as 'nearly as made and of the highest rarity' the token achieved one of the highest prices of the sale.

SOLD FOR £5,400





A Richard III 'angel' coin featuring rare markings was recently sold at London Coins. The obverse of the coin featured a double saltire colon after the 'DI' in 'RICARD:DI:GRA:REX' not recorded on any of the four more common varieties. Richard III ruled from 1483 to 1485 when he was slain at the battle of Bosworth Field thus becoming the last of the Plantagenet Kings, owing to his short reign all his coins are scarce with the gold being especially rare. The auction house explained: 'The vendor now in his eighties has had this coin in his possession for fifteen to twenty years, and was given it as a gift by a night club owner in Liverpool who ran an antique shop as a hobby to enable him to acquire antiques "over the counter", neither the current vendor (who for many years believed the coin was a Sovereign) nor the night club owner were interested in coins and the presumption was it came in over the counter twenty to forty years ago as part of an antique collection or perhaps contained in an antique piece of furniture.'

SOLD FOR £17,000





A Ptolemy I Soter, *c.*305-282, was recently sold at Numismatica Ars Classica. The very rare coin's reverse depicted a 'quadriga' of elephants driven by figure of deified Alexander, holding thunderbolt and sceptre. The coin was described as 'Very rare. Minor edge marks, otherwise good very fine'.

SOLD FOR £12,000

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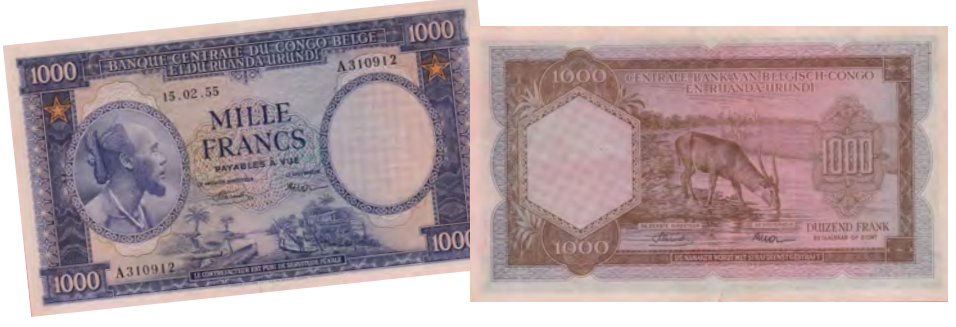
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Coins on a budget

This month's bargain coin is an Antoninianus of the Emperor Gallienus (253-268 AD), which was purchased for £10 from a dealer, writes Ed Archer. This coin is billon-copper with a silver wash. There is, however, a reasonable amount of silver in the coin as it was struck in Rome about 257 AD; three years before Gallienus's father and co-emperor Valerian was defeated in Syria.

On the reverse of the coin is the Latin inscription 'ROVIDENTIA AVGG', which means 'the foresight of the emperors'; this refers to Valerian making his son co-emperor in 253 AD. The figure of Providentia is shown holding a cornucopia (signifying plenty), she holds a rod which is sometimes used to point at a globe. On this coin the globe is tiny and lies by her left foot.

On the obverse there is the Latin inscription 'IMP CP LIC GALLIENUS AVG', expanded the inscription translates as 'Emperor CP LICINIUS GALLIENUS AUGUSTUS.' The portrait is of a young bearded Gallienus wearing a radiate crown, a symbol linking him to the god Jupiter.



The rise of the Fallen Horseman

Ed Fletcher tells the story behind a popular mid-4th century coin series that offers interesting possibilities for newcomers to Roman coin collecting



Hollywood's take on the Roman Empire (*Gladiator*, *Spartacus*, *Centurion*, et al) has emphasised conquests and military glories over all else the Romans achieved, to the extent that most newcomers to Roman coin collecting often feel disappointed when so few coins display images that depict Roman soldiers in battle. Numerous campaigns and victories are celebrated, of course; but for the most part the relevant coins have obverses carrying emperors' busts adorned with laurels; and on their reverses personifications of the deities who helped the rulers to achieve their military successes. When specific legions earned citations that were recorded in a coin's legend, or as a countermark stamped into a coin after minting, the price asked for the piece today often puts owning it beyond the means of a newcomer to the hobby.

Weapons frequently appeared within reverse designs; but usually as small peripheral props and rarely in the hands of the soldiers who wielded them in battle. Trophies, eagles and personifications of Victory were engraved on so many coins simply because numerous wars were fought and won to keep the Empire's borders expanding; but as to the legionaries who risked all in man-to-man combat on every new frontier, very little was recorded on the money they received in their pay. But if the paragraphs you have just read leave you feeling even more pessimistic about ever owning a coin showing a dramatic scene of a Roman soldier in action, take heart from the next two...

Decades ago, when those who have become today's advanced collectors or even professional numismatists, first embarked on the hobby, attention focused very much on the early emperors who issued large bronze sestertii, huge numbers of silver denarii and enough gold aurii to

ensure that a middling collector in the 20th century could expect to add an aureus to his/her collection within a year or two of taking up the hobby. Silver and bronze coins of renowned emperors such as Augustus, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Trajan, Hadrian and Septimius Severus, whose reigns (among others) spanned the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, featured on every newcomer's must have even if only in f-grade list. Issues dating from the 3rd century – a period when inflation and unrest had begun to affect the imperial economy and cause reductions in the size, weight and metal content of coins – were generally avoided by all but schoolboy collectors and academics. As for coins of the 4th century, most were consigned to a relatively uncollected category often referred to as barbarous.

Metal detectorists searching across Europe and Britain during the past few decades have brought many thousands of Roman 4th-century coins to light. The finds form the bulk of inexpensive, uncleaned lots seen on eBay; and of professionally cleaned coins offered by dealers catering for beginners. Take a chance on an uncleaned lot, or poke through a dealer's tray of low-priced Roman at a coin fair, and you can almost rest assured you will have an example depicting a fighting Roman legionary in your grasp just as firmly as he grasps his weapon. He will be seen on the coin's reverse in the act of killing the barbarian cavalryman he unhorsed moments earlier. The enemy's steed, broken limbed as a result of its heavy fall, lies beneath or alongside the rider who is taking a thrust to his body from a Roman spear. To explain why such action-packed coins were issued in vast numbers during the mid-4th century requires a brief but interesting history lesson:



Left: this 2nd-century denarius celebrated the defeat of Dacia with an image of the emperor Trajan on its obverse, and on its reverse a personified Victory carving the name DACIA on a commemorative stone. The legionaries who did the fighting and dying received no mention

Bottom left: some Fallen Horseman types issued by Constantius II

Right: Constans issues



Below: examples issued by Constantius Gallus

By tradition AD 348 marked the eleven hundredth anniversary of the founding of Rome by the demi-god Romulus in 753-752 BC; but the 4th-century years leading up to what ought to have been a time for commemorations across the Empire had brought nothing but turmoil and warfare. Tribes beyond the frontiers had become especially troublesome and made numerous incursions into border provinces. Within the Empire increasing challenges for territorial gains had brought rebellion and bloody internecine warfare to the very core of the Imperial family. Add inflation, a run of bad harvests, steep declines in the size and intrinsic value of coins from official mints ... clearly little to celebrate with so many clouds gathered over the once glorious Empire.

It was at that very moment in the midst of so many crises, that the Constantinian dynasty's well-oiled imperial propaganda machine swung into action with the introduction of new bronze coins for circulation across the Empire. By contemporary standards they were large (15 to 24mm in diameter) and most were generously silver-washed. The obverses showed imperial portraits; the reverses carried the inspiring inscription: 'FEL TEMP REPARATIO' (*Felicia Tempora Reparatio*) which we can freely translate as happy times are here again. Reverse images included (among others) a Phoenix as a symbol of the Empire's rebirth; an imperial

figure holding a statue of Victory and standing in a galley, which probably represented a crossing to Britannia to expel northern invaders; and the Fallen Horseman mentioned above.

A process of elimination in combat (often between themselves) had whittled Constantine the Great's successors down to just two sons – Contantius II and Constans – by the time of the Fel Temp Reparatio issues. Constans, who had crossed the Channel to visit Britannia a few years earlier in 342, preferred the Galley reverse, though he also issued Fallen Horseman types. Constantius II was the most prolific issuer of Fallen Horseman types; and when his brother died at the hands of the usurper Magnentius in 350, the Fallen Horseman became the most commonly struck coin across the Empire for the next ten years, the overwhelming majority issued by Constantius II. Despite a huge official output, local mints in many provinces had to strike copies to satisfy demand.





Constantius Gallus issued coins, all showing the Roman soldier attacking the fallen horsemen, the victim's wounded steed can clearly be seen beside him on many of the coins

Even as inflation diminished their size, the type remained popular because its reverse inscription raised spirits. Seeing the lettering every time money changed hands, the Empire's civilian sons and daughters continued to hope that what their legitimate Emperor promised would be delivered. Admiring the bravery and military skills of the legionary in halting and despatching an invading enemy reinforced their belief that civilians could feel safe behind the legions who defended them as much as their emperor.

Handle and examine as many Fallen Horseman types as you can lay hands on. You will soon notice that the tribesman is depicted in four positions: facing the soldier with an arm raised, slumped over his horse, seated on the ground, or kneeling. His uniform also varies, depending on which tribe was attacking the borders at the time of issue. Add variations in the legionary's kit and dress, together with different mint marks, and this group can soon become a huge obsession for some collectors; one known to me having so far acquired more than 800 varieties and still anticipating more, thanks to detectorists continuing to recover them from ploughsoils across Europe. They can also be found in smaller numbers in parts of Britain.

An early step on the road to recognition of varieties within the series would be to pick out a horseman wearing a Phrygian helmet. It originated in Phrygia (now western Turkey) and spread to Thrace, Dacia and the Hellenistic world where its wearers eventually encountered the Roman Empire. Usually formed from a single sheet of bronze, it had a front peak which shaded the wearer's eyes and protected the face from downward blows. Cheekpieces to protect the sides of the head were often decorated to suggest a beard and moustache. You can also hone your recognition skills by deciding in which of the four positions mentioned above the dying tribesman is shown. The accompanying illustrations will help; but there is no substitute for owning and admiring your own Fallen Horseman coins.

Thanks to the Wildwinds database for use of images seen in this feature. Visit www.wildwinds.com to see many more examples of the Fallen Horseman type.

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The coins of the Battle of Agincourt

As we mark the 600th anniversary of the major English victory in the Hundred Years' War, Ed Archer examines the coins of the period, focussing on those pieces used at the time in England and France

This year marks the 600th anniversary of the battle of Agincourt, fought on 25 October, 1415. The famous battle made not only the reputation of the English King Henry V but the role of the English and Welsh archers; it was these men who delivered an overwhelming victory over the forces of the French King Charles VI.

The English and Welsh archers at the Battle were said to be the deciding factor, catching the French unaware





Right: both side of a Henry V groat

Coins struck by Henry V in England and in France

Henry V coins, including gold pieces, are difficult for collectors to find as they are fairly rare and his reign was relatively short, covering the years 1413 to 1422. The following denominations were struck: the noble, the half noble, and the quarter noble. The obverse on some issues of these gold nobles were identical in design to those of Henry IV, alluding to the fact that it took some while for the mints to get themselves properly organised after the death of Henry IV in 1412. However, there is one way to differentiate the gold coinage of Henry V from that of his father Henry IV: the absence of any reference to Aquitaine.

The silver coins of Henry V include groats, half groats, pennies, halfpennies and farthings. These coins usually bore a mintmark on them; there were three varieties and these were all based on the cross. The groat was a well designed coin, however, there was insufficient silver to strike large quantities of groats and half groats so they are fairly rare.

The smaller denominations were often badly struck as well as being hard to decipher. They were only struck at the mints in London, Durham and York. There was a brief period when Calais struck only farthings. This is surprising since Calais was a Staple – a centre for selling goods into Europe – and the French port was the major outlet for England's wool trade.

What about the value of the coins in the pocket of people who took part in Agincourt? A groat (4d) was the basic daily pay for an archer though on the Agincourt campaign it was a groat and a half groat, in other words, sixpence. If the archer wanted good quality beer it would cost him about half a groat a gallon. The brigandine, which was a specially reinforced plated jacket, would cost at least several months salary.

Below: Henry V farthing







From left: Ecu a la Couronne of King Charles VI; the obverse a blanc minted at Rouen; the reverse of a Charles VI blanc from Toulouse



Right: Lord Thomas Camoy Trotton of Surrey who commanded the left wing of the English army at the Battle of Agincourt

Bows and arrows were rather cheap although they were made by specially trained craftsmen such as the fletchers.

Knights had major costs to bear. Their armour cost twenty pounds which was the equivalent of four years salary for an archer. The knight's horse was between 8 to 10 pounds. The cost of this was borne by the knights themselves and so major campaigns were not always welcomed on account of the expense.

The financial burden of having an army in the field even for a few weeks was very costly to the king so the currency ultimately ended up being slightly debased; for the French this proved to be a serious problem.

It is interesting to note that Henry V imitated the Pascal Lamb golden Écu of Charles VI, however the English version of the Écu had more of gold in it.

Amongst other issues Henry V made were billon blancs and black money, so called because it tarnished easily, because it had a low silver content. These had different inscriptions from their French counterparts and also featured small 'H's on them to show that were struck for Henry V.

French coinage at the time of Agincourt

At the time of the battle, France's currency was in a poor state. This situation came about early on in Charles VI's reign through unscrupulous noblemen getting what they could out of a France sliding into bankruptcy. These rascals were known as the Marmosets on account of their practice of dipping their hands into France's financial reserves.

By 1410 Charles VI had managed to regain control of the finances and had stabilised the Écu á la Couronne which had replaced the Écu a Cheval, however the newer coin did contain less gold; in reality an approximate fifteen percent devaluation had taken place. The devaluation was not missed by the authorities in Burgundy, which may explain the Burgundian decision to change sides after the battle of Agincourt as they considered support of English King Henry V to be more profitable.

Gold was not the only part of the French currency to be devalued and there were few coins being struck with a high silver content. The best silver coin was the grossus (or groat) issued briefly in 1413, just two years before Agincourt, but the vast majority were billon coins with high copper content and small amounts of silver.

The most common coins one would have found in the pockets of a French soldier at Agincourt were the blancs or guenars issued at a variety of royal mints stretching from Rouen in the north to Toulouse in the south. Alongside the blancs would be some bits of black money – double tournois or two penny pieces.



Left: the reverse of a groat of Henry IV minted in Calais; the obverse of a Henry V noble

Other coins found on the battlefield

French coins were not only struck by the king but also by the Dauphin. This situation is further complicated by the Counts of Burgundy who struck French-style coins for the regions of France in which they had control, such as Dijon. Fortunately for the collector the job of identifying these different French coins is made slightly easier by having a series of mint marks that aid identification.

It is also recorded that crossbowmen from Genoa and Savoy were present at Agincourt. Both regions belonged to France earlier in the reign of Charles VI, but had fallen under the Milan's Visconti family by the early 1400s.

Coins on the English side would include those that had been struck in the English possession of Aquitaine. Due to lack of records about the striking of coins in this area of France it is difficult to make a distinction between those of Henry IV, V or VI. There are two major types: the double hardis with a half length king, similar to a half groat in size; and the black money or deniers with a cross with leopards in two of the angles. The leopard design was to be employed after Agincourt in Henry V's design for the mints such as Rouen.

'Stupor Mundi'

In our exclusive series on the coins held at the British Museum's Coins and Medals Department, Richard Kelleher examines the gold coinage of Emperor Frederick II

Money in medieval Europe, at least before the 14th century, was largely confined to the silver penny and occasionally smaller denominations. Large silver coins had yet to emerge and the production and circulation of gold coinage at this period remained the prerogative of the exotic Byzantine and Islamic worlds. As with all generalities there were some exceptions to the rule, especially in those Christian lands which bordered on the Islamic world; such as the Spanish kingdoms, Sicily and the crusader states. These regions had better access to gold, which mostly came from sub-Saharan Africa, and as such were in a position to produce their own gold coins. However, these were normally heavily influenced by Islamic designs. In the first half of the thirteenth century this rubric was to change and one of its principal architects was Frederick II, the Holy Roman Emperor.

The Holy Roman Empire was a large complex of territories in central Europe which emerged in the time of Charlemagne and continued in various forms until 1806. In the Middle Ages it comprised the kingdoms of Germany, Bohemia, Burgundy, Italy and the Regno (southern Italy and Sicily) as well as many smaller feudatories.

Fredrick II was the son of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI of the Hohenstaufen dynasty. He was elected King of the Germans in 1196 and upon his father's death was brought to Palermo and crowned King Frederick I of Sicily in 1198, with his mother acting as regent and forsaking her son's claim to the imperial throne. However, following the invasion of Italy by Emperor Otto IV, Frederick was elected in absentia as German King at the Diet of Nuremberg (1211) with the support of Pope Innocent III, who excommunicated Otto.

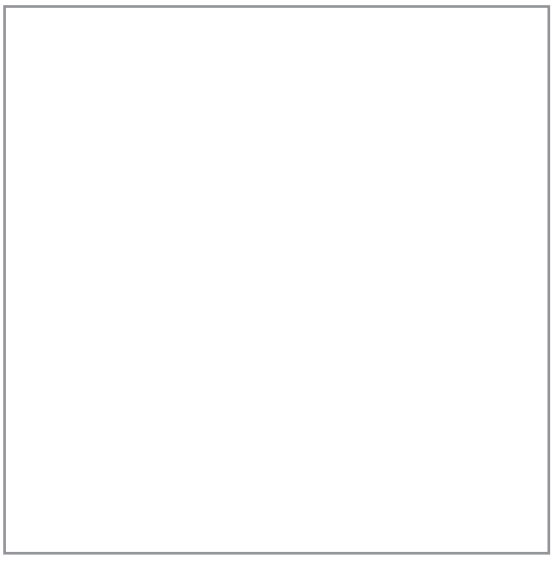
In 1212 Frederick was officially crowned King of the Germans in Mainz. He was again elected king of Germany in 1215, but had to wait until Otto's death in 1218 and further negotiations with the pope before being crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 1220.

He was one of the most powerful of medieval rulers and has been described as 'a man of extraordinary culture, energy, and ability – called by a contemporary chronicler stupor mundi (the wonder of the world), by Nietzsche the first European, and by many historians the first modern ruler – Frederick established in Sicily and southern Italy something very much like a modern, centrally governed kingdom with an efficient bureaucracy'. He was an avid patron of science and the arts and played a major role in promoting literature. He spoke six languages – Latin, Sicilian, German, French and Greek and uniquely for the time also Arabic. He spent much of his reign in conflict with the papacy.

The splendid coin illustrated here comes from the British Museum's collection and was acquired in 1906. It is known as the augustale. On its obverse is a fine stylised bust in high relief which, along with the inscription 'IMP ROM CESAR AVG', makes it strongly reminiscent of the classical coinage of the early Roman emperors rather than medieval rulers. The reverse bears a large imperial eagle with the name 'FRIDE RICVS'. It was minted in Messina. The use of more self-consciously European designs was an original feature of Frederick's coinage and the clearly western design was intended to attract admiration for their issuer. The augustales became familiar in Italy and in turn prepared the way for the revival of gold coinage in western Europe.

Italy was to lead the 13th-century 'Commercial Revolution' in matters of trade and finance. This was accompanied by a great increase in the production and use of gold coinage. Southern Italy already had a tradition of minting gold coins, which was developed further by Frederick's reformed coinage. The commercial centres of northern Italy had no gold coins of their own until 1252, when Florence introduced the florin, and this innovation was copied by Genoa and Venice. The florin was the model for a large-scale trade coinage made from gold mined in Hungary and the first successful French gold coinage in the 1290s. This was ultimately the inspiration for the English gold coinage, which would have to wait another fifty years to emerge as a permanent part of the currency.





The design of the augustale coin reflects Emperor Frederick II's intellect and love of art and culture

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When boy scouts delivered the mail

Christer Brunström takes a look at Prague's Scout Post, the perfect subject for a small sideline collection, and a topical theme for the forthcoming festive season

In many communities throughout the UK scout groups run charity posts just before Christmas delivering cards locally at a cost far below the rate charged by Royal Mail. It is of course an excellent way to raise some funds for other scout-related activities.

The Boy Scout movement was the brainchild of Lord Baden Powell, who organised a local mail service during the 1900 Siege of Mafeking in South Africa using young men as postmen; his portrait appeared on one of the stamps produced in the town, the other showing a post-boy. This is where all important Boy Scout thematic collections start.

They then proceed to the 1918 Scout post of Prague, the capital of Czechoslovakia. The new Czechoslovak state had been proclaimed on 28 October, 1918 comprising territories previously included in Austria and Hungary.

In different regions of the Bohemian and Moravian lands, Austrian postage stamps were overprinted with the new country name. Hungarian stamps were similarly overprinted to be used in Slovakia. There were also other emergency measures to indicate that postage had been paid. Some of these provisional issues were more or less bogus.

Prague's Scout stamps were in many ways a semi-official issue. The two stamps were released on 7 November, 1918. There were two values – 10 heller blue and 20 heller red. There are two distinct shades of the 10 heller stamp, blue and bright blue, indicating that there were two printings. The bright blue variety is a lot scarcer than the blue stamp.



An example of the 10 heller blue Prague Scout stamp on a cover dated 1918





Both values of the Prague Scout stamps

The stamps depict the Lion, the main feature of the Czechoslovak coat of arms; 30,000 sets were printed.

The postal delivery service in the capital experienced a lot of problems in the early days of independent Czechoslovakia. This is when the boy scouts helped out by delivering the mail to local addresses in Prague.

Prague's postal delivery service experienced many problems, prompting the boy scouts to help out by delivering the mail to local addresses

The letters had to be franked with the Scout Post stamps. When the letters were delivered the scout postman received the amount indicated on the stamp. It was thus an excellent way to obtain some extra pocket money.

The stamps were cancelled in different ways. The cancel that is most often seen includes the words 'POSTA SKAUTU, PRAHA' and '1918'. The date was filled in by hand.

The first issue of Scout stamps is still quite affordable but there was an additional issue of stamps marking the arrival of President Mazaryk to Prague. In all, 600 sets were overprinted to mark this event and these stamps are of course major rarities today. It is essential to have certificates of genuineness when acquiring these scarce stamps which I have only seen in gold medal collections of Scouting on Stamps.

Towards the end of 1918, the Czechoslovak Post Office released its first Prague Castle definitive stamps designed by art nouveau artist Alfons Mucha and postal matters returned to a more or less normal state of affairs. In 1920, Czechoslovakia became a member of the UPU.

It should also be noted that Austrian and Hungarian postage stamps remained postally valid throughout Czechoslovakia until 28 February, 1919. The Austrian stamps could be used on mail posted in Bohemia and Moravia and certain Hungarian stamps remained valid in Slovakia. Thus many of the provisional locally overprinted stamps were not really necessary but should be seen as an expression of patriotic jubilation following the country's independence.

Prague's Scout Post is the perfect sideline collection. It will fill a page or two in our albums but for most collectors it will sadly never be complete due to the rarities required. However, the Scout stamps remind us of a most interesting period in European history and they also certainly belong in collections devoted to the First World War.

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